Researching Metaphor in the Ancient Near East

Edited by
Marta Pallavidini and Ludovico Portuese

PHILIPPIKA
Altertumswissenschaftliche Abhandlungen
Contributions to the Study of Ancient World Cultures 141

Harrassowitz Verlag

PHILIPPIKA

Altertumswissenschaftliche Abhandlungen
Contributions to the Study
of Ancient World Cultures

141

2020

Harrassowitz Verlag · Wiesbaden

Researching Metaphor in the Ancient Near East

Edited by
Marta Pallavidini and Ludovico Portuese

2020
Harrassowitz Verlag · Wiesbaden

Bis Band 60: Philippika. Marburger altertumskundliche Abhandlungen.

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

Bibliographic information published by the Deutsche Nationalbibliothek
The Deutsche Nationalbibliothek lists this publication in the Deutsche Nationalbibliografie; detailed bibliographic data are available in the internet at http://dnb.dnb.de.

For further information about our publishing program consult our website http://www.harrassowitz-verlag.de

Printed on permanent/durable paper.
Printing and binding: Hubert & Co., Göttingen
Printed in Germany

ISSN 1613-5628
ISBN 978-3-447-11437-0
e-ISBN 978-3-447-39022-4

Contents

Acknowledgements VII

Ludovico Portuese & Marta Pallavidini
Researching Metaphor in the Ancient Near East: An Introduction 1

Stéphanie Anthonioz
The Lion, the Shepherd, and the Master of Animals: Metaphorical Interactions and Governance Representations in Mesopotamian and Levantine Sources 15

Esther Brownsmith
To Serve Woman: Jezebel, Anat, and the Metaphor of Women as Food 29

Joseph Lam
Visualizing 'Death' (Môtu) in the Ugaritic Texts 53

Davide Nadali
Aššur is King! The Metaphorical Implications of Embodiment, Personification, and Transference in Ancient Assyria 69

Marta Pallavidini
How Did They Think? Towards Use of Metaphor Theories to Research the Hittite Conceptual World 85

Judith Pfitzner
Cows of Battle, Urinating Lions, and Frightened Falcons: On Metaphor in Sumerian Literary Compositions 95

Ludovico Portuese
Live and Let Live Images: Metaphor and Interpictoriality in Neo-Assyrian Art 115

Claudia Posani
The Significance of the Embrace Metaphor in the Inscription KARKAMIŠ A 21 ... 141

Silvia Salin
Metaphors and Conceptual Metaphors in the Mesopotamian Medical Texts 153

Nelson Henrique da Silva Ferreira
Metaphor for the Construction of Spontaneous Meaning: Examples Gathererd from the Rural Landscape in Sumerian Literature 167

Lisa Wilhelmi
"Squeezing" Like Oil from a Sesame Seed: On the Conceptual Background of Metaphoric Expressions in Akkadian Diplomatic Texts Originating from Ḫatti 187

Abbreviations 201

Acknowledgements

This book represents the result of the workshop "Researching Metaphor in the Ancient Near East" that we organized for the 65th *Recontre Assyriologique Internationale* held in Paris in July 2019.

We would like to thank, first, the organizing committee of the 65th RAI for welcoming our workshop in the *Recontre* and, second, the workshop's participants for the vivid discussion their talks generated.

We deeply thank the authors who contributed to this volume, for having met our deadlines and for their kind, quick and professional reactions to our requests and questions, thus letting the proceedings of the workshop to be published one year after the *Recontre*.

Our gratitude goes also to the editors of the series *Philippika. Contributions to the Study of Ancient World Cultures* for accepting enthusiastically our volume in their series: it is certainly a pleasure and an honor to see our volume included in this excellent series.

We kindly thank also Margherita Andrea Valsecchi Gillmeister a valuable second set of eyes to review all the formalities. We appreciate the thoroughness of her work, of course every mistake still present in the volume is only our responsibility.

This publication was achieved thanks to the financial support of the Volkswagen Stiftung that carried the publication costs. As funding organization of the project "How did they think? Conceptual metaphors in the Hittite culture" within the program "Original, isn't it? New Options for the Humanities and Cultural Studies" – carried out at the Freie Universität Berlin by Marta Pallavidini – we are particularly grateful for its support.

Finally, a special thanks goes to our families, in particular to Marco and Teresa respectively, who supported us by taking care of everything else when we needed time for our metaphors.

The final steps of this book have been carried out during the COVID-19 pandemic: it was a hard time for all of us, so we want to express our sincere thankfulness to everyone who made the realization of this project possible!

Berlin, April 2020
Marta & Ludovico

Per correr miglior acque alza le vele
ormai la navicella del mio ingegno,
che lascia dietro a sé mar sì crudele;
e canterò di quel secondo regno
dove l'umano spirito si purga
e di salire al ciel diventa degno

(Dante, *La Commedia, Purgatorio, Canto I*, vv. 1–6)

Researching Metaphor in the Ancient Near East: An Introduction

Ludovico Portuese & Marta Pallavidini (Freie Universität Berlin)

In the third tablet of the Gilgameš Epic, Enkidu's reaction to Gilgameš's idea to kill the ogre that lives in the Cedar Forest, the savage Ḫuwawa, is to warn his friend of the terrors that such an adventure would hold: "Ḫuwawa, his voice is the Deluge, his speech is fire and his breath is death".[1] This description is highly metaphorical, it appears divine or numinous, and thus not of this world. No adequate description can be given using terms that are grounded in worldly experience. Metaphor, accordingly, constitutes the only means of communicating the otherworldly or extraordinary experience. It forms the bridge between direct and mediate experience, between the religious and the human, and furnishes a common bond of understanding between people.[2]

In a similar vein, in the Akkadian version of the Annals of Ḫattušili I, the Hittite king is depicted as a lion: "like a lion with its paw, he rendered powerless the city of Ḫaššu" (Obv. 35).[3] In this passage, a list of characteristics like force, power, aggressiveness are conceptualized in a single metaphorical image, that is, the lion. Furthermore, the same image is also traditionally connected to the idea of heroic kingship, so that in one metaphor several different concepts are subsumed and communicated.

These and many other examples proliferate in textual and visual evidence from the ancient Near East, which have produced a cornucopia of metaphors. This expression, used by Benjamin A. Foreman to refer to the Book of Jeremiah, is deliberately embraced here to draw the attention on the richness of metaphors scattered in texts and images from the ancient Near East.[4] In fact, although research on metaphor in the Hebrew Bible – a product of an ancient Near Eastern culture – has blossomed in recent years,[5] the study of metaphor in ancient Near Eastern studies has been neglected or only episodically investigated.[6] Where it has been investigated, the concept of metaphor has been used without reflection on its definition and features.

1 George 2003, 203, column iii, lines 110–111.
2 Jacobsen 1976, 3.
3 CTH 4.I. Edition: Devecchi 2005.
4 Foreman 2011, 1.
5 See, with reference to previous and further literature, Van Hecke (ed) 2005.
6 See below.

What is the metaphor, and how it can be detected in past sources from the ancient Near East? How does today's receiver understand and appreciate a metaphor used by ancient cultures? Scholars have seldom reflected on these questions, and the answer is, in fact, surprisingly complicated. Scholars have mostly dealt with the issue following what metaphor is commonly thought of since antiquity.[7]

In ancient times, metaphor has been an object of study by philosophers, rhetoricians and scholars in general. Aristotle in *Poetics* explains it as consisting "in giving the thing a name that belongs to something else; the transference being either from genus to species, or from species to genus, or from species to species, on the grounds of analogy".[8] Furthermore, he inferred that "producing good metaphors is equivalent to observing the similarities"[9] and defined this attitude as "the mark of the genius".[10] Quintilian, in the *Institutio Oratoria*, defines metaphor as *similitudo brevior*[11] and Cicero identifies the functions of metaphor in making speech more fashionable and more persuasive.[12] Since then, metaphor has been traditionally considered a trope, and it still is, as explicitly stated by the definition given by the *Oxford English Dictionary* where metaphor is defined as "a figure of speech in which a name or descriptive word or phrase is transferred to an object or action different from, but analogous to, that to which it is literally applicable".[13] All these definitions contribute to highlight a set of specific and narrowly confused views on metaphor, which basically imply that metaphor: is a linguistic phenomenon; is used for literary and rhetorical purposes, to embellish speech or to make it more incisive; is based on analogy or similarity between the entities compared; and, finally, that its production is deliberate and is the expression of the genius of the authors.[14]

This definition of metaphor as a figure of speech has been widely accepted, and in general scholars of the ancient Near East have addressed the issue of metaphor without reference to specific theoretical approaches. In short, metaphor and its importance has been recognized but barely investigated according to a specific theory of metaphor. This is what emerges from the seminal work *The Treasures of Darkness: A History of Mesopotamian Religion* (1976) by Thorkild Jacobsen, who points out the basic importance of metaphors for the study of Mesopotamian religion: "the whole purpose of the metaphor is a leap from

7 For a recent and broad examination on the metaphor, see Ritchie 2013, 4.

8 Aristotle, *Poetics,* 1457b, 6–7 (Μεταφορὰ δέ ἐστιν ὀνόματος ἀλλοτρίου ἐπιφορὰ ἢ ἀπὸ τοῦ γένους ἐπὶ εἶδος ἢ ἀπὸ τοῦ εἴδους ἐπὶ τὸ γένος ἢ ἀπὸ τοῦ εἴδους ἐπὶ εἶδος ἢ κατὰ τὸ ἀνάλογον). The idea of analogy as basis for metaphorical production is expressed also in *Rhetorics*, 1411a–b.

9 *Poetics*, 1459a, 8 (τὸ γὰρ εὖ μεταφέρειν τὸ τὸ ὅμοιον θεωρεῖν ἐστιν). On the similarity aspect see also *id., Topics,* 139b–140a.

10 Aristotle, *Poetics*, 1459a, 6–8 (μόνον γὰρ τοῦτο οὔτε παρ' ἄλλου ἔστι λαβεῖν εὐφυΐας τε σημεῖόν ἐστι· τὸ γὰρ εὖ μεταφέρειν τὸ τὸ ὅμοιον θεωρεῖν ἐστιν).

11 Quintilian, *Institutio oratoria* VIII 6, 8–9 (In totum autem metaphora brevior est similitudo, eoque distat quod illa comparator rei quam volumus exprimere, haec pro ipsa re dicitur).

12 Cicero, *Rhetorica ad Herennium*, IV.34; *De oratore* III, 158–162.

13 http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/117328?redirectedFrom=metaphor#eid. A similar definition can be found also in the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*: https://www.britannica.com/art/metaphor. For a recent and broad examination on the metaphor, see Ritchie 2013, 4.

14 See on these implications Kövecses 2002, vii.

that level (the literal), and a religious metaphor is not truly understood until it is experienced as a means of suggesting the Numinous".[15] As one example, in the hymn to the moon god, Nanna, the god's basic shape is described according to the image of a ruler and of a young bull, metaphor of power to engender, create new life, and multiply the herd.[16] In a similar vein, scholars have acknowledged the Gilgameš Epic as rich with metaphors. In addition to the example cited above, the hero's prowess with the mattock is likened to a hunting net, where the mattock is the tool of burial and the net is a metaphor for the shades' captivity in the Netherworld, over which Gilgameš presides.[17] Religious metaphors like this show the human effort to understand and make understandable the nonhuman. This concept is in line with what biblical scholars have identified in the Hebrew Bible as the metaphorical nature of God-language or – as Brent A. Strawn points out – the nature of metaphor as language for God.[18] It is not by chance that metaphors in the Mesopotamian literature have been also examined with a view toward elucidating references in the Hebrew Bible. Ronald A. Veenker (1999–2000) uses this approach to explain some passages in the Bible by examining the broad variety of sexual metaphors in the Mesopotamian literature. The focus is on texts dealing with fruit and sexual eating, which turns out to be a "simple metaphor" for intercourse used by the biblical narrator to tell the reader by means of this metaphor that Adam and Eve experienced sex for the first time in the Garden.

In all these instances, the functions of metaphor have been regarded by scholars as means to make the speech more fashionable and more persuasive, but especially to describe the ineffable and indescribable. Thus, most contributions to the study of metaphors in the ancient Near East have focused on textual evidence and treated metaphors as ornamental analogies used to make comparisons, according to the Aristotle's "substitution theory". But there have been increasing efforts to take an integrative approach that examines the metaphor with new perspectives. The need for a new approach was sensed in 1983, when a group of scholars from Britain, Holland, Germany, and Israel met at the Warburg Institute and the School of Oriental and African Studies specifically to discuss the use of figurative language in Sumerian, Akkadian, Ugaritic, and biblical Hebrew literature. In the introduction to the proceedings of the symposium published in the volume *Figurative Language in the Ancient Near East* (1987), Markham J. Geller acknowledges that "the current trends away from historical grammar and linguistics have meant that languages such as Sumerian and Akkadian do not feature in studies of metaphor and figurative language. The Semitists, on the other hand, have generally not entered into the arena of semiotics and 'the meaning of meaning', because so much of the basic work of lexicography and the production of text editions remains to be done".[19] The enquiry carried out by the contributors of the symposium spans metaphors both in figurative imagery and architecture, in the

15 Jacobsen 1976, 5.
16 *Ibid.*, 7–8.
17 George 2003: 107. For further identified metaphors, see *ibid.*, 108, 238, 324. See also Jacobsen 1976, 195–219.
18 Strawn 2005, 5.
19 Geller 1987, vii.

language of religion and love, in commercial contexts and in the everyday language. Some of the authors make reference to the favourite old distinction between "dead" and "living" metaphors, namely the idea that a conventional metaphor is "dead" and no longer influences thought.[20] Although specific metaphor theories are not used, the significant result of this volume is that the many etymological investigations addressed the issue of metaphor not merely as rhetorical embellishment but also as a common means of lexical extension, recognizing its productive role in all discourse, not only poetry.

To what extent can modern linguistic theories and methods illuminate the nature of metaphor? Current theories actually offer important new paths for understanding what ancient writers were actually talking about or doing and their patterns of thought. Metaphor has in fact been reconceptualised and is nowadays considered to be fundamental to the human conceptual system. This relatively new perspective on metaphor, fathered by George Lakoff and Mark Johnson with their Conceptual Metaphor Theory (1980), is in a certain sense revolutionary in that metaphor is conceived not only as a question of language but, first and foremost, of thinking and consequently of acting. The theory treats the metaphor as a conceptual rather than a purely linguistic phenomenon or a decorative device, used in everyday life by people as an integral part of the process of human thought and reasoning. Lakoff and Johnson give LOVE IS A JOURNEY as a simple example of a metaphor and argue that it embraces a number of ideas related to the lovers conceived as travellers, the love relationship as the vehicle, potential difficulties as journey's impediments, relationship goal(s) as the journey's destination, and so on, even if not every instance of metaphorical mapping from one domain (i.e., JOURNEY) to another (i.e., LOVE) is explicit. This new approach thus considers metaphor as the main mechanism through which we humans comprehend a relatively abstract or inherently unstructured subject matter (target domain) in terms of a more concrete, or at least more highly structured, subject matter (source domain). The metaphors are nothing but mappings across conceptual domains, where each mapping is not arbitrary but grounded in the body and in everyday experience and knowledge. Accordingly, metaphor is identified as structuring features of human thought, particularly as expression of "embodied" human experience from the inseparable perspective of one's own body.[21]

Chikako E. Watanabe's monograph *Animal Symbolism: A Contextual Approach* (2002), represents an important contribution to the reflection about metaphors in the ancient Near East and the available metaphor theories. It explores the numerous lion metaphors in the Mesopotamian royal context pointing out that, although the symbolic associations of the king with the lion is clear for today's readers, care is required when modern views are applied to past culture metaphors. Watanabe adapts a metaphor theory that belongs to the philosophy of language propounded by Max Black, according to which the metaphor-

20 Lakoff and Turner (1989, 129) have criticized this view and pointed out that "The mistake derives from a basic confusion: it assumes that those things in our cognition that are most alive and most active are those that are conscious. On the contrary, those that are most alive and most deeply entrenched, efficient, and powerful are those that are so automatic as to be unconscious and effortless".

21 See below.

ical statement has two distinct subjects, the primary and the secondary.[22] In the statement "the king is a lion", the primary subject is the king and the secondary subject the lion. It is the secondary subject, in particular, that signals a system of relationships evoking various ideas, images and features which are projected onto the primary subject. Specifically, some expressions in Sumerian (e.g. "I am the lion with wide-open mouth") may be easily interpreted because some statements evoke associated implications based on the naturalistic and concrete gestures of behaviours of the animal. Other expressions (e.g. "lion with awe-inspiring eyes") are more abstract and evoke notions by a conceptual means in which ideas are built upon basic knowledge shared within the community which, if not shared, then the metaphorical meaning may not be effective.[23] In a similar vein, Brent A. Strawn's monograph *What Is Stronger than a Lion? Leonine Image and Metaphor in the Hebrew Bible and the Ancient Near East* (2005) also proceeds to investigate the use of the lion in the art and literature of the ancient Near East going through past and modern metaphor theories, from which the author draws the following conclusions: metaphors are i) comparative, in an interactive way, ii) contextually conditioned, namely context impacts the construction, reception, and interpretation of metaphor, iii) polyvalent and, consequently, also open-ended. More importantly, Strawn raises the problem, or limit, for today's scholars to approach metaphor in antiquity. In fact, the ancient user's metaphor could potentially and irreparably be misunderstood by the modern receiver. He cites as an example the fact that not all cultures, for instance, treat time as a commodity that can be spent, saved, or wasted; so that as a consequence the metaphor TIME IS MONEY would not be universally understood. Both user and receiver, then, should share knowledge of the subsidiary subject in general; if they do not share such knowledge, then the full significance of the user's metaphor may be unavailable or lost to the receiver. Strawn, in this regard, rightly argues for an adequate understanding of the user's sign-context to at least at some minimal level, which enables the receiver to make sense of and appreciate the content of the metaphor in a way analogous to the user.[24] This may even happen also within the same culture: if similar metaphors were used for long time, such as 2000 years, we cannot be sure whether or not they were understood in the same way in the different eras and geographical locations.[25]

That said, metaphor theories indicate that some of the problems evident in previous research are actually more difficult to solve than they at first appear. Therefore, in order to ensure that previous mistakes are avoided, it is fundamental to rethink metaphor in the ancient Near East in the light of the more updated theories and methods. That is why it is only recently that there has been a mounting interest among scholars of the ancient Near East in new views on metaphor, which has inevitably led to research approaches that

22 Black 1962.

23 Previous results in this direction were already presented in Watanabe 2000.

24 Strawn 2005, 5–16.

25 In this respect, see the paper of Hätinen 2017 on the metaphorical expression "I am a fully laden boat!", the aim being to contextualise the boat metaphors used in Mesopotamian literary expression. For an in-depth examination of the non-universality in metaphorical conceptualization, both cross-culturally and culture-related, see Kövecses 2005.

take into account the influences of metaphor on and its interactions with textual evidence. In this regard, Ronald A. Simkins's article (2014) is indicative in that it relies on recent and revolutionary theories to approach the creation metaphors in Mesopotamia, Egypt, and Israel and how the many diverse metaphors may nonetheless express a single cultural understanding of creation. In fact, the literature of ancient Near East attests to a diverse collection of metaphors used to describe the creation of the world in terms of human procreation, sexual intercourse, or agricultural and human actions. This relationship between the human body and the creation have been in the first place explained through the works of Lakoff and Johnson because the body functioned as a model for the world, the procreation of the human body (microcosm) offered an appropriate analogy for understanding the creation of the world and society (macrocosm).[26] Simkins argues accordingly that this complex symbolic relationship between the body and the world formed the basis of the ancient Near Eastern understanding of creation. A further important point made by Simkins is that metaphors ordinarily are constrained by existing cultural understandings, that is to say that the selection of metaphors is a feature of culture so that metaphors can be understood or can work only if they correspond to the people's cultural understanding.[27]

As well as creation myths, good examples of the use of this approach to metaphor are found in the study of textual sources for ancient medicine. These texts often employ technical language and terminology derived from specific domains of life for which in many circumstances the use of metaphor becomes essential and inevitable. In this respect, scholars look for new conceptual frameworks suitable for studying the phenomena of metaphor in ancient medicine, often drawing on influential paradigms from cognitive linguistics and phenomenology. The recently published volume "*The Comparable Body: Analogy and Metaphor in Ancient Mesopotamian, Egyptian, and Greco-Roman Medicine*" (2017) provides examples of papers which deal with different thematic threads on analogy and metaphor, often building on modern theories such as the above-discussed Conceptual Metaphor Theory or the Conceptual Blending Metaphor Theory propounded by the cognitive scientists Gilles Fauconnier and Mark Turner.[28] In particular, in the ancient Near Eastern studies the Conceptual Metaphor Theory has been adopted in the works of Silvia Salin regarding medicine and related topics (e.g. diseases) in ancient Mesopotamia.[29]

Likewise, metaphor theories have begun to be considered as a tool to investigate the relationship between written language and the political discourse. Marta Pallavidini (2017, 2018 and in press) has introduced the Conceptual Metaphor Theory to investigate conceptual metaphors in Hittite historiographic and diplomatic texts. In detail, she explored the relation between the Hittite kings and other rulers of the ancient Near East in treaties, whose dynamics of power were expressed with metaphor that transcended the limit of a single language or culture. What emerges is the fundamental role of conceptual metaphor in shaping the diplomatic discourse in the Late Bronze Age.

26 Lakoff and Johnson 1980, Lakoff 1987. See also, recently, Hampe (ed) 2017.
27 Kövecses 2005.
28 Fauconnier and Turner 2002.
29 Salin 2017, 2018a and 2018b.

Metaphor theories raise a multitude of questions concerning the study of the ancient world, and their application regards several different disciplines, not only ancient Near Eastern studies but also Classics as well as Egyptology. By regarding metaphors not just as an ornamental linguistic device but as an essential process and product of the mind, metaphor can be seen as both essential to the language and also to visual art, being a product of thought. In fact, metaphors are pivotal in nonverbal manifestations as well. The non-verbal use of metaphor has not been investigated either on the same scale or with the same rigour as metaphor in language. However, visual metaphor has become a popular research topic in contemporary culture in a context characterized by the so-called "pictorial turn".[30] Research in this area has blossomed in recent years and new methods of analysis are being proposed by modern theorists, often relying on insights gained in linguistic metaphor research, developing methods to identify visual forms of metaphor and also to pinpoint their conceptual structures.[31] However, in ancient Near Eastern studies, visual metaphor research occupies an under-represented area of inquiry. Compared to textual analyses, very few academic studies have featured this specific topic and, where they have, the authors have barely recognised the role of metaphor or at most made only a passing reference to it.

The essays of Irene J. Winter on ancient Near Eastern art, in this respect, are rich with metaphorical interpretations of figurative subjects. For instance, in reading and interpreting the particular mode of representing the body of Naram-Sin on the famous Victory Stela and what such a mode might have meant for ancient viewers, she concludes that this representation is metaphor for the ruler's potency. Therefore, the victorious attitude of the king, "his well-rounded buttocks, his muscled calves, his elegantly arched back, his luxuriant beard" should be read as metaphor of male vigour, authority and dominance, and reproductive potential.[32] Regardless for the correct use of the word metaphor in this context, Winter's study has the merit of contextualizing metaphor, that is to say its interpretation must be strictly bound to the culture that has produced it. In a similar vein, Winter demonstrates that in the statues of Gudea many properties in the domain of form must be metaphorically read, such as physical size as metaphor of charisma and social power.[33] Here, again, Winter stresses the importance of reading qualities of expression associated with visual imagery as culturally and historically specific, in order to advance the interpretation of these images.

30 Mitchell 1994, 11.

31 For the identification of conceptual metaphor in written documents, the Metaphor Identification Procedure has been developed by a group of researchers (see for the specifics of the procedure Pragglejaz Group 2007). For a reappraisal on previous literature and current inquiries on visual metaphor, see Forceville 1996; Serig 2008; Steen 2018.

32 Winter 1996.

33 Winter 1989. Also the still debated motif showing a stylized tree flanked and, apparently, touched by winged figures in some of the Neo-Assyrian palaces bas-reliefs, have often been referred to by scholars as metaphor for an act of reproduction, inciting many more or less speculative works (see Giovino 2007 for a reappraisal of previous works on this issue). However, as noted by Selz 2014, 660 note 14, a careful study of semiotics and cognitive linguistics would greatly improve on the speculative approach used in these papers.

There appear to be no studies in which the identification and analysis of visual metaphors in antiquity has been based on a general theory of metaphor. Could theories of linguistic metaphor therefore be employed in understanding visual metaphors? In a very broad sense, a visual metaphor is not dissimilar in appearance to textual metaphor: it basically makes an analogical comparison between two terms, stating that one term is figuratively like the other term, even though the two are literally different. To interpret a visual metaphor, one must therefore identify the two terms of the metaphor, the primary and secondary subject, and which features of the secondary subject are projected upon the primary subject. According to theorists, some sort of anomaly or incongruity is an obligatory feature of a visual metaphor, in other words pictures that invite a metaphorical interpretation usually display some departure from viewers' expectations and their understanding of reality. To be metaphorical, accordingly, the picture must possess something odd, a deviation from the expectation of the viewer, and a stimulus representing incongruity. Moreover, the visual metaphor must not be confused with the notion of symbolism, since metaphors are not symbols, and the two concepts cannot be used interchangeably. In detail, a metaphorical representation is a transformation that occurs when one thing in its entirety denotes another thing in its entirety. The circle as psyche, mandala as wholeness or balance, or the sun as life are examples of visual metaphor. Visual metaphor, accordingly, is a potent stimulus for generating and tapping new, different, or deeper levels of meaning.[34] Symbols, by contrast, have fixed meanings regardless of context. When a symbol is understood, it is no longer a dynamic source of further meanings.

The premises used in the above-cited work of Watanabe are drawn from linguistic theory; and the author delves further into the issue by extending the analysis of rhetorical devices used in language to an investigation of iconography using animal symbolism in Mesopotamia. She consequently adopts a specific terminology to describe texts and images: texts are defined as metaphoric and images as symbolic. Accordingly, the notions expressed in animal metaphors in relation to kingship are also represented symbolically in iconography. As an example, the image on Assyrian royal seals of the king stretching out his left arm to grasp the top of the head of a lion which faces him is a metaphor for the king's action and quality which are seen through the posture and danger of the lion; the king is capable of harming and killing anyone, even the strong and enraged lion shown in the scene.

Cognitive linguistics is the methodological background of a more recent study on plant metaphors in ancient Mesopotamia presented by Gebhard J. Selz (2014). He investigates the many textual, but also visual, references which allow us to connect diverse terms like the "Plant of Rejuvenation", the "Plant of Life", the "Tree of Life", the "Sacred Tree", the "Bread of Life", the "Primeval Flower", and even the "Plant of Birth-Giving". His conclusions, built on the theoretical concepts derived from Lakoff's work from 1987 on Idealised Cognitive Models, and from the Conceptual Blending Theory of Fauconnier and Turner, reveals that an entire set of connected but not identical religious ideas lie behind the textual and pictorial evidence. Following this line of thought and relying on

34 Feinstein 1982, 50.

Lakoff and Johnson's Conceptual Metaphor Theory, Ludovico Portuese (2018) proposes first that the plant of life mentioned in the Assyrian royal correspondence belongs to the long-standing Mesopotamian tradition traced by Selz, which highlights a more metaphoric use of plant terms referring to life or the renewal of youth rather than a literal use, suggesting that this figurative language emerges from knowledge structures which reside in long-term memory. Second, it is concluded that the plant, depicted on palace bas-reliefs in the form of a lotus flower, was used primarily by the king to express his mercy and metaphorically indicate himself as a life-giving ruler. The visual metaphor is thus gaining prominence in recent studies, but as yet it has by no means been extensively investigated and theorized, and confusion still pervades terminology, such as the distinction between visual metaphor and symbol. Moreover, almost without exception, analyses of visual expressions have been made only by relating them to comparable textual examples. Furthermore, the theoretical and methodological bases that have been used have been limited and further work is essential and highly required. There is still much work to be done in the context of ancient Near Eastern studies, with a combined and integrated examination of both text and visual elements, based on a coherent and explicit theoretical understanding.

The "metaphor revolution" in ancient Near Eastern studies has started, and the ground-work has been laid by the prominent studies listed above. These have rejected the notions that metaphor is exclusively a linguistic phenomenon, and that it is immune to new approaches drawing on other fields of investigation. From this swift review, what emerges is that the historic material at our disposal must be engaged comprehensively and holistically and that close attention must be paid to the ancient context. Analysis should consider both textual and visual elements, and metaphor theories should drive the interpretive process. The editors envisage an outcome in which metaphor offers us a way to consider the ancient evidence from a new and stimulating perspective.

The present volume seeks to fill the gaps in the current scholarship and to suggest new paths of research in this field. Involving Assyriologists, Hittitologists, Semitists, and art historians, it gathers the papers given in a workshop organized by the two editors during the 65th *Rencontre Assyriologique Internationale* held in Paris (July 8th-12th 2019), and shows that different disciplines can profit from closer contact and open dialogue. In fact, contributions approach the topic of metaphor in the ancient Near East from different theoretical and methodological perspectives. Chronologically, the time span embraces more than two millennia, from the Sumerian to the Neo-Assyrian period and beyond. Geographically, the area covered spreads from Mesopotamia, to Anatolia and to the Levant. Accordingly, the sources under analysis include Sumerian literature, hieroglyphic Luwian, Hittite texts, Neo-Assyrian texts and reliefs, as well as Biblical sources.

Three papers mainly explore the metaphors of Neo-Assyrian evidence, drawing out detailed examples from texts and images and proposing comparisons with non-Mesopotamian sources. Stephanie Anthonioz examines and compares the representation of governance according to Assyrian and Levantine textual and iconographic sources, with a particular focus on the images of the lion, the shepherd, along with the Master of animals. Anthonioz evaluates these images in an associative and interactive way, giving special emphasis to the interaction between lion and shepherd in the Book of Amos, which produc-

es an uncommon effect of irony. She thus concludes that these images make full sense only if scrutinized in their interactive interpretation; additionally, a comparison between Assyrian and biblical texts highlights the different views and perspectives scribes adapted and adopted from culture to culture to rework on the same metaphors.

The image, or metaphor, of the lion is examined also in the contribution of Ludovico Portuese on the interpictoriality in the Neo-Assyrian sources. In detail, he focuses on three case studies, the birds of prey, the lotus flower, and the lion hunt, to highlight how both the motifs and their related metaphorical meanings travel through time and space. To achieve this goal, a dialogue between the mechanism of interpictoriality, the conceptual metaphor theory and the image metaphor theory is proposed to bring to the fore that the reign of Ashurbanipal in particular was characterized by a pronounced "hyperinterpictoriality", that is to say a particular intense presence of "migrating images" and, therefore, of "migrating metaphors" from previous periods, especially from the reign of Ashurnasirpal II.

Davide Nadali considers metaphor as a rhetoric device that can evoke images, and thus focuses on the interaction of words and pictures and the ways they interact to represent the Assyrian kingship. Metaphor is explored in examples that have a precise visual and material manifestation, that is to say the metaphor of the "king is a lion" and the metaphorical implications bound to the expression "Aššur is king!" pronounced in the royal coronation ritual. Particularly, the former refers not only to the lion-animal comparison but also works as image carved onto the Assyrian state seal and impressed on the goods belonging to the crown; the second, instead, is deemed to be an embodied process, leading Nadali to conclude that "Aššur is king!" is the "materialization of divine power via the body of the king and the legitimization of the Assyrian king via the body of the god".

Shifting from the Neo-Assyrian period to previous times, two contributions analyze metaphors in Sumerian literature. Judith Pfitzner observes and evaluates some unusual metaphors that appear in Sumerian literature of the Old-Babylonian period. These metaphorical images are carefully dissected, and consequently explained by their relying on different phenomena: the metaphor of the frightened falcon is explained by a misleading interpretation of the signs; the cow of battle emerges by a misleading translation that took place already in antiquity; the destroyed brick metaphor is produced by a modern misleading translation (that is also the explanation for the image of the snake devouring a carrion) as well as by an ancient play with sign and their phonetics; the urinating lion suggests a certain degree of scribal creativity. Pfitzner's main point is that in many cases the metaphors can be explained by a close analysis of the context in which documents are produced, while in some other cases a wider perspective is required.

Nelson Henrique da Silva Ferreira analyses metaphors related to rural landscape that produces spontaneous meaning, following the same approach of Nadali's paper, according to which words are evocative of objects and ideas. Da Silva Ferreira explicitly does not engage with the debate about metaphor, the central concept of the study being the semiotic principle of the "sign of meaning", that is to say "a visual marker that identifies the individual characteristics of an image that can convey a crystalized meaning". In detail, the author argues that some concepts expressed through symbolic language are drawn from the observation of the natural world (e.g. richness, fertility, abundance and prosperity), since "the

relation landscape/agricultural is an engine of linguistic creativity and established connections between abstract thought and natural world". In conclusion, semiotics is proposed as a tool not only for a better reading of ancient literature but also to approach languages that are built on the cosmos that produces the symbolic language of literature itself.

Three contributions take us from Sumerian literature to the hieroglyphic Luwian and the Hittite world. Claudia Posani investigates and proposes a new reading of the metaphorical expression AMPLECTI-*mi* commonly translated as "beloved". The author first compares the evidence from the inscription KARKAMIŠ A 21 with other written attestations that include the expression, and with the so-called *Umarmungszenen*, embrace scenes, represented on Hittite seals and reliefs; then she goes on to assess and define metaphor as linguistic and mental process according to cognitive linguistics. Posani finally circles back to the expression under examination to translate it not as "beloved" but as "embraced".

Marta Pallavidini presents and investigates the metaphor in Hittite textual evidence. The author shows how the processing of the Hittite written sources according to the conceptual metaphor theory and via the metaphor identification procedure can open an access to the conceptual world of the Hittites, which can lead to new evidence for long-debated issues, like, for instance, the origin and formation of the scribes who produced the Hittite texts and the reciprocal influences of the different languages attested in the sources from the Hittite kingdom. Also, other two fundamental theoretical approaches are discusses relying on examples from different Hittite textual genres, the deliberate metaphor theory and the conceptual blending theory, both showing as useful in the understanding and interpreting some complex metaphors.

The contribution of Lisa Wilhelmi, moving from the conceptual metaphor theory, focuses on the problem of the translation of the metaphor in different languages. She shows first that the problem of the translation is present and is to be considered with a great degree of awareness also in modern spoken languages, since not all metaphors are universal, or universally understood. Keeping in mind this challenge, Wilhelmi focuses on some metaphorical expression attested in the Hittite diplomatic texts written in Akkadian: *ina kul libbi* 'wholeheartedly', the verb ṣaḫāṭu with the meaning 'to pressure', and , the locution ḫāma u ḫuṣāba ul leqû with the literal meaning '(to) not take a piece of chaff or a splinter of wood', metaphorically interpreted as '(to) not take a single thing'. The author demonstrates how these expressions can be explained by different mechanisms that apply to the conceptual and writing process of scribes who were, most probably, not Akkadian native speakers.

The effectiveness of the conceptual metaphor theory applied to ancient written sources is shown also in the paper from Silvia Salin, dedicated to the metaphorical expressions related to the concepts of disease and pain in Mesopotamian medical texts. The analysis shows that metaphors adopted to describe disease and pain are shared by a number of cultures, even the modern Western culture (e.g. ILLNESS IS AN ENEMY). Salin also assesses the metaphors related to the concept of body: since illness caused by witchcraft is something that enters the body of the victim, illness is accordingly something contained within the body, turning the body into a container. The consequent conceptual metaphor is

that THE BODY IS A CONTAINER and THE BODY IS A HOUSE, thus proving the validity of a conceptual approach to metaphors in ancient documents.

Conceptual metaphors play also a central role in the contribution of Esther Brownsmith focused on Anat and Jezebel and on their conceptualization as women hunting men, instead of women consumed as food by men. This behavior is unusual, for in the ancient Near East women are conceptualized as consumed food, not as consumers or even hunters. Such a phenomenon is explained by considering other elements, such as the gender of Anat or in the light of the fact that Jezebel ended up being devoured. To dissect and scrutiny the implications of these unusual metaphors, Brownsmith approaches the context via the conceptual blending theory, arguing that "the author of the Jezebel narratives used the metaphor woman is food to make an implicit argument: Jezebel, as an example of the dangerous Foreign Woman, reversed the natural order of things; the appropriate response to such unnatural behaviour is the violent reassertion of traditional norms". The author thus concludes that Anat and Jezebel act independently of men and assert their autonomy with bloody force and, through these examples, she shows the importance of conceptual metaphor to shape stories.

Finally, the paper contributed by Joseph Lam, presents a topic that appears challenging to engage with when dealing with metaphors, that is the representation of deities in texts. He focuses on the anthropomorphic, theriomorphic and surreal visualizations of Môtu (death) in Ugaritic documents, and argues that the concept of metaphor is not sufficient to convey the modes of representation of Môtu, and in general of deities, since the role of metaphor may vary across the different modes of depiction of a deity. The visualization of deities do not provide, in fact, the reader or hearer with a predetermined way to read the divine conception, being the representations literal, partially metaphorical, or fully metaphorical. Accordingly, Lam suggests that one-dimensional and totalizing approaches should be avoided, and a study of metaphors and deities rather requires multiple approaches to fully grasp the richness of their representation in literary texts.

In sum, the wide variety of methodological approaches presented in this volume exemplifies some of the ways metaphor can be profitably studied in the ancient Near Eastern sources. Therefore, the editors' goal was to encourage the authors to draw conclusions based on close readings of case studies in their own field. The workshop has illuminated and treated in detail specific ancient sources – both textual and visual – and examined typologies of issues, adopting from time to time different strategies for encountering and coping with common problems. It has drawn attention to perspectives that might otherwise be taken for granted and that, if explored, could open new research directions in the field of ancient Near Eastern studies.

Bibliography

Black, M. 1962, *Models and Metaphors*, Ithaca: Cornell University Press.
Devecchi, E. 2005, *Gli annali di Ḫattušili I nella versione accadica*, Studia Mediterranea 16, Pavia.
Fauconnier, G. – Turner, M. 2002, *The Way We Think. Conceptual Blending and the Mind's Hidden Complexities*, New York: Basic.
Feinstein, H. 1982, "Meaning and Visual Metaphor", *Studies in Art Education* 23/2, 45–55.
Forceville, C. 1996, *Pictorial Metaphor in Advertising*, London/New York: Routledge.
Foreman, B.A. 2011, *Animal Metaphors and the People of Israel in the Book of Jeremiah*, Forschungen zur Religion und Literatur des Alten und Neuen Testaments 238, Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht.
Geller, M.J. 1987, "Introduction", in: M. Mindlin – M.J. Geller – J.E. Wansbrough (eds), *Figurative Language in the Ancient Near East*, London: School of Oriental and African Studies.
George, A.R. 2003, *The Babylonian Gilgamesh Epic: Introduction, Critical Edition and Cuneiform Texts* (Vol. 1), Oxford: Oxford University Press.
Giovino, M. 2007, *The Assyrian Sacred Tree: A History of Interpretations*, Fribourg/Göttingen: Academic Press/Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht.
Hampe, B. (ed) 2017, *Metaphor: Embodied Cognition and Discourse*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Hätinen, A. 2017, "'I am a fully laden boat!' A Mesopotamian Metaphor Revisited", *KASKAL* 14, 169–186.
Jacobsen, T. 1976, *The Treasures of Darkness: A History of Mesopotamian Religion*, New Haven/London: Yale University Press.
Kövecses, Z. 2002, *Metaphor. A Practical Introduction*, New York: Oxford University Press.
—. 2005, *Metaphor in Culture. Universality and Variation*, Cambridge/New York: Cambridge University Press.
Lakoff, G. 1987, "Image Metaphors", *Metaphor and Symbolic Activity* 2/3, 219–222.
Lakoff, G. – Johnson, M. 1980, *Metaphors We Live By*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
Lakoff, G. – Turner, M. 1987, *More than Cool Reason. A Field Guide to Poetic Metaphor*, Chicago/London: University of Chicago Press.
Mitchell, W.J.T. 1994, *Picture Theory: Essays on Verbal and Visual Representation*, Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
Pallavidini, M. 2017, "On Some Expressions Describing the Relation Between the Hittite King and his Vassals in the Hittite Subjugation Treaties: A Cognitive Approach", *News from the Land of the Hittites* 1, 91–100.
—. 2018, "On some metaphorical expressions related to the sematic field of sight in the Hittite international treaties", *Res Antiquae* 15, 125–136.
—. In press, "Shaping Diplomacy through Language: Networks of Metaphors in the Hittite Diplomatic Texts", in press for *Journal of Ancient Civilizations*.

Pragglejaz Group 2007 "MIP: A Method for Identifying Metaphorically Used Words in Discourse", *Metaphor and Symbol*, 22/1, 1–39.

Portuese, L. 2018, "Metaphorical Allusions to Life-Giving Plants in Neo-Assyrian Texts and Images", *Antiguo Oriente* 16, 93–116.

Ritchie, L.D. 2013, *Metaphor*, Key Topics in Semantics and Pragmatics, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Salin, S. 2017, "'Stinging pain' in Assyro-Babylonian Medical Texts: Some Considerations", *Le Journal des Médecines Cunéiformes* 29, 35–48.

—. 2018a, "Words for Loss of Sensation and Paralysis in Assyro-Babylonian Medical Texts: Some Considerations", *Le Journal des Médecines Cunéiformes* 31, 26–37.

—. 2018b, "Conceptual Metaphors and Networks of Metaphors in the Assyro-Babylonian Medical Texts", *State Archives of Assyria Bulletin* 24, 195–211.

Selz, G.J. 2014, "Plant Metaphors: On the Plant of Rejuvenation", in: S. Gaspa – A. Greco – D. Morandi Bonacossi – S. Ponchia – R. Rollinger (eds), *From Source to History. Studies on Ancient Near Eastern Worlds and Beyond. Dedicated to Giovanni Battista Lanfranchi on the Occasion of His 65th Birthday on June 23, 2014*, Alter Orient und Altes Testament 412, Münster: Ugarit-Verlag, 655–667.

Serig, D. 2008, *Visual Metaphor and the Contemporary Artist: Ways of Thinking and Making*, Saarbrücken: Verlag Dr Müller.

Simkins, R.A. 2014, "The Embodied World: Creation Metaphors in the Ancient Near East", *Biblical Theology Bulletin* 44/1, 40–53.

Steen, G.J. (ed) 2018, *Visual Metaphor: Structure and process*, Amsterdam/Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing Company.

Strawn, B.A. 2005, *What is Stronger than a Lion?: Leonine Image and Metaphor in the Hebrew Bible and the Ancient Near East*, Fribourg/Göttingen: Academic Press/Vandenhoeck &Ruprecht.

Van Hecke, P. (ed) 2005, *Metaphor in the Hebrew Bible*, Leuven: Peeters.

Veenker, R.A. 1999–2000, "Forbidden Fruit: Ancient Near Eastern Sexual Metaphors", *Hebrew Union College Annual* 70/71, 57–73.

Watanabe, C.E. 2000, "The Lion Metaphor in the Mesopotamian Royal Context", *Topoi Supplementa* 2, 399–409.

—. 2002, *Animal Symbolism in Mesopotamia: A Contextual Approach*, Wiener offene Orientalistik 1, Wien: Ferdinand Berger&Söhne.

Wee, J.Z. (ed) 2017, *The Comparable Body: Analogy and Metaphor in Ancient Mesopotamian, Egyptian, and Greco-Roman Medicine*, Studies in Ancient Medicine 49, Leiden/Boston: Brill.

Winter, I.J. 1989, "The Body of the Able Ruler: Toward an Understanding of the Statues of Gudea", in: H. Behrens – D. Loding – M.T. Roth (eds), *Dumu-e2-dub-ba-a: Studies in Honor of* Åke *W. Sjöberg*, Philadelphia: The University Museum, 573–583.

—. 1996, "Sex, Rhetoric, and the Public Monument: the Alluring Body of Naram-Sîn of Agade", in: N.B. Kampen – B. Bergmann (eds), *Sexuality in Ancient Art: Near East, Egypt, Greece, and Italy*, Cambridge/New York: Cambridge University Press, 11–26.

The Lion, the Shepherd, and the Master of Animals: Metaphorical Interactions and Governance Representations in Mesopotamian and Levantine Sources*

Stéphanie Anthonioz (Université catholique de Lille, UMR 8167)

As Brent A. Strawn reminds us, metaphor theory has cast significant light on the interpretation of metaphors and the way they function.[1] This can be briefly summarized in the following way: metaphor is a literary figure that speaks of one thing (A) by means of another (B). The relationship between A and B creates a complex interaction with the transfer of some or all of B's qualities to A with the consequence that B may be likened to A. This interaction between elements could in theory be extended to different metaphors that have at least one element in common. For example, if the king (A) is associated with the image of the lion (B) in different sources but also to that of the shepherd (C), one could no longer consider these metaphors in a separate way (A/B and A/C) but in their interaction (A/B/C). The shepherd and the lion are images as well as vivid metaphors which have each received much attention.[2] Closely connected to the lion and the shepherd stands the image of the Master of animals which is less documented,[3] possibly because of the fewer textual sources referring to it. It is obvious that these images are those that represent power in the ancient Near East and particularly royal and divine power. This is true also in Greece as documented by Johannes Haubold,[4] who, for example, explores the pastoral theme according to Foucault's concept of pastoralism and studies how it is reworked in two ancient literary texts, *Gilgameš* and the *Iliad*.[5] However, these metaphors have rarely been studied in their interaction. One important and as yet peerless study has,

* I would like to thank Márton Farkas for his careful reading of this contribution and improving my English.

1 Strawn 2005, 1–15.

2 Strawn 2009 and 2015; Pyper 2014; Nahkola 2011; Albenda 1972, 1974, and 2008; Seyer 2006 and 2007; Watanabe 1998 and 2000; Collins 1998; Cassin 1981. Concerning the image of the shepherd, see footnote 37.

3 Selz 2018; Counts and Arnold (eds) 2010; Diamond 2003; Keel and Uehlinger 2001, 183–192.

4 Haubold 2015; Heil 2006.

5 Haubol 2015. According to the author, Greek and Mesopotamian authors participated in a long-standing debate about pastoral leadership which spanned the Eastern Mediterranean and Near East. Homer and *Gilgameš* describe the problem in similar terms, but they disagree on how it can be

however, been published: *The Master of Animals in Old World Iconography*, edited by Derek B. Counts and Bettina Arnold, lays the fundament for such an endeavor.[6] As the authors remind us, in the realm of iconography, the image of the master of animals in its diversity has enjoyed wide-ranging popularity. Indeed, this very image allowed for the articulation of various concepts in binary opposition so essential to social, political and religious representations, such as human vs. nature; earthly vs. divine; strength vs. weakness; authority vs. subordination; wild vs. tamed; life vs. death; and order vs. chaos. The Master of animals manifests royal power and the maintenance of order in the cosmos through nature. In a stimulating manner, in Cyprus, the case for the re-appropriation of a Master of animals into a shepherd – the good shepherd as the Christian context makes clear – is attested.[7] In this case, the re-appropriation was easy since the qualities of element B, the Master of animals, did overlap with those of element C, the good shepherd, element A, being the common element to both images, the sovereign lord.

As far as I am aware, the images of the lion, the shepherd, and the Master of animals, though closely associated in the realm of sovereignty, have not been the object of what could be called an associative or interactive analysis. This contribution aims at revisiting these images, analyzing the sources in interaction, without excluding them and confronting them even in their contradictions. The following analysis is based on textual sources and should be further enriched by the study of iconographic sources. In the first part, I will review Assyrian royal inscriptions and their treatment of the figures of the lion and the shepherd. In the second part, I will review Levantine sources, which will allow me to propose, in the Book of Amos, a detailed analysis of the interactive metaphors of the lion and the shepherd.

The Lion in Mesopotamian Royal Inscriptions[8]

There is no doubt that the metaphorical dimension of the leonine figure is of great antiquity in Mesopotamian sources. It is often associated with the hunt and this point has been abundantly studied and theorized.[9] In royal inscriptions from the Medio-Assyrian peri-

addressed. This, then, is my third point: while the *epic of Gilgameš* suggests that the shepherd can be reformed, Greek epic is far less optimistic.

6 Counts and Arnold 2010.

7 "The presence of this ostensibly pagan image in a secondary context raises some interesting questions with respect to the transition from paganism to Christianity in Cyprus. The appropriation of pagan religious iconography within Early Christian symbolism is a common one, and the weight of the evidence here suggests the statuette may have provided a suitable icon for a Christian god who was now worshiped as the 'Good Shepherd'" (Counts 2010, 135).

8 Seux 1967, in particular pp. 147–148 and 436–437 (*labbu*, PIRIG, 'lion').

9 "Kings undertook this activity at all times for a wide variety of reasons such as for amusement and sportive activity. It formed not only a privilege but also an obligation for them, because in so doing they had to meet the demands, which were assigned to them as the ruler of their people. Therefore the hunt gained particular importance in the life of the royal court. Precisely because of the promi-

od, the lion is indeed present through the motif of the royal hunt, among other animals. At this point, one should be reminded that this figure is not metaphorical: "The gods Ninurta and [Nergal, who love my priesthood, gave to me the wild beasts and commanded me to hunt]. 300 lions [... with my fierce] valor [...] six strong [wild] virile [bulls] with horns [... from my ... chariot] and on [my swift] feet, [in my] second regnal year, [... with my] sharp [arrows] I [... The remainder of the numerous animals] and the winged birds of the sky, [wild game which I acquired, their names are not written with these] animals, [their numbers are not written with these numbers]" (Aššur-bel-kala 02, iii 29').[10]

Clearly the royal hunt is an organized event and is associated with the gathering of herds of diverse species (Aššur-bel-kala 07, iv). This organization is also a royal demonstration as the king enters the stage to be victorious in the eyes of all, his people, vassals and enemies. In this way, the scene recreates a microcosm of the world: the animals represent the forces of the universe, both positive and negative ones.

Lions are also part of the architecture of Assyrian buildings and, interestingly, texts bear testimony to this visual representation of the cosmic empire and its well-ordered movement from center to periphery. The animals are messengers of both aggression and protection: they defend the palace in a double manner. They (somehow) endow the monuments and their resident with their very power and terror. This analysis is based on the inscriptions from the reign of Aššur-bel-kala, yet it is confirmed by the inscriptions from the reigns of Aššur-reša-iši, Šamši-Adad IV and Tiglath-pileser I[11] as well as from those of the Neo-Assyrian period, Adad-nerari III, Aššur-dan II, Ashurnasirpal, Tiglath-pileser III, and Sennacherib.[12] One may note, moreover, in the inscriptions from Ashurnasirpal II the apparition of the royal and leonine title: "At that time my sovereignty, my dominion, (and) my power came forth at the command of the great gods; I am king, I am lord, I am praiseworthy, I am exalted, I am important, I am magnificent, I am foremost, I am a hero, I am a warrior, I am a lion, and I am virile; Ashurnasirpal, strong king, king of Assyria, designate of the god Sîn, favorite of the god Anu, loved one of the god Adad (who is) almighty among

nence which it gained as actual exercise for kings, it also developed into a literary and artistic topos, which might display a manifold symbolism, but need not be connected with actual hunting events. The ideas which are associated with the royal hunt trace their origins back to the cultures of the ancient Near East; (...) the same ideas were not only perpetuated during the reign of the Achaemenids, after the conquest of the Assyrian and the Neo-Babylonian Empires by Cyrus the Great, but also conveyed the same meaning in the time of Alexander the Great and his diadochs, and, furthermore, were consciously utilised for political reasons" (Seyer 2006, 171–172).

10 See Aššur-bel-kala 03, 1'. All Assyrian royal inscriptions are quoted from *The Royal Inscriptions of Assyria online (RIAo) Project*: http://oracc.museum.upenn.edu/riao/

11 Aššur-reša-iši I 01, 8; 02, 3 (lions at the entrance of the temple of Ištar), Šamši-Adad IV 3, 1' (monumental lions), Tiglath-pileser I 01, vi 76 (hunt).

12 Adad-nerari III 2010, 19 (monumental lions), Aššur-dan II 1, 68 (hunt), Ashurnasirpal II 002, 31b (hunt and zoo); 002, 35 (zoo); 002, 40 (hunt); 019, 30 (hunt); 028, v 7b (religious architecture); 030, 84b (hunt); 030, 95 (breeding); Tiglath-pileser III 47, r 29'b (architecture); 2001, 1 (architecture), Sennacherib 1, 83; 2, 60; 15, vi 61; 16, vi 74; 17, vi 89; 17, vii 9; 17, vii 26; 39, 51b; 39, 61b; 40, 31''b; 40, 37'b; 41, 2''; 42, 22'; 42, 28'b; 42, 33'b; 43, 73; 43, 79b; 43, 85b (architecture).

the gods, I, the merciless weapon which lays low lands hostile to him, I, the king, capable in battle, vanquisher of cities and highlands" (Ashurnasirpal II 001, I 31b).[13]

The title knows of a particular development especially in Sennacherib's inscriptions: "When they reported his (Marduk-apla-iddina's) evil deeds to me, Sennacherib, the attentive man of the steppe, I raged up like a lion and ordered the march into Babylon to confront him. He (Marduk-apla-iddina), the (very) image of an evil gallû-demon, heard about the advance of my expeditionary force, then he reinforced their companies with horses (and) Elamite, Aramean, (and) Chaldean archers" (Sennacherib 1, 16).[14]

Though not all references to lions documented in the sources are metaphors, the image develops in a metaphorical way, endowing the Assyrian king with the qualities and force of the lion. However, the leonine metaphor is not unique in representing royal and imperial governance of the world.

The Shepherd in Mesopotamian Royal Inscriptions

In Mesopotamia, Akkadian *rēûtu* or 'shepherdship' is the office divinely created for the benefit of humankind. In the *Epic of Etana* Ištar goes in search of a shepherd at the beginning of history, and the same idea is found in the Graeco-Babylonian author Berossos. The role of the shepherd as divinely sanctioned is essential and even rulers who are themselves outsiders, as Cyrus the Great, for example, portrayed themselves as shepherd (cf. *Cyrus Cylinder*).

The image of the shepherd is found in the royal titles all through the medio- and neo-Assyrian periods.[15] Thus Aššur-nādin-apli proclaims: "Aššur-nādin-apli, appointee of the god Enlil, vice-regent of the god Aššur, strong king, king of all people, prince, king of kings, faithful shepherd, to whom by the command of the gods Aššur, Enlil, and Šamaš the just scepter was given and whose important name was called for the return of the land, the king under the protective hand of the god Anu and select of the god Enlil, chosen of the gods Aššur and Šamaš, I, son of Tukultī-Ninurta (I), appointee of the god Enlil, vice-regent of the god Aššur; son of Shalmaneser (I) (who was) also appointee of the god Enlil (and) vice-regent of the god Aššur" (Aššur-nadin-apli 1, 1).

If the image of the 'faithful shepherd' is frequent,[16] many variants are attested: 'shepherd of all the settlements',[17] 'shepherd of mankind',[18] 'attentive shepherd',[19] 'chief

13 See also Ashurnasirpal II 017, i 35; 020, 40b.
14 See also Sennacherib 1, 25; 18, v 11'b; 22, v 67b; 23, v 57.
15 Seux 1967, in particular pp. 243–250 and 441–446 (*re'û*, 'graze'; *rē'û*, SIPA, 'shepherd').
16 See Shalmaneser I 01, 107; Tiglath-pileser I 01, i 28; 02, 11; 10, 1; 11, 1; 14, 1.
17 Shalmaneser I 01, 1.
18 Shalmaneser I 04, 1; 18, 1.
19 Tiglath-pileser I 01, i 15; 02, 7; Tukulti-Ninurta I 01, i 1; 39, 1.

herdsman',[20] 'pious shepherd',[21] and later on 'capable shepherd',[22] 'obedient shepherd',[23] 'shepherd of the black-headed',[24] 'true shepherd'.[25] The image is further developed: 'for shepherding the land and people',[26] 'shepherding in truth and justice',[27] 'shepherding all of the people',[28] 'you entrus[ted] me with shepherding Assyria',[29] 'the one who shepherds the four quarters (at the heels of the god Šamaš)',[30] 'the shepherd who has charge over them, [and the herdsman] who properly administers them'.[31]

Longer developments may also be quoted: "When Aššur, my lord, faithfully chose me to worship him, gave me the scepter for my office of shepherd, (presented) me, in addition, the staff for my office of herdsman, granted me excellence so that I might slay my enemies (and) subdue those who do not fear me, (and) placed upon me the lordly crown; (at that time) I set my foot upon the neck of the lands (and) shepherded the extensive black-headed people like animals. He (Aššur) teaches me just decisions. Like ... the Anunnakū gods ... the gods ... the strength" (Tukulti-Ninurta I 01, I 21).[32]

The image is also associated with green pastures (cf. Tiglath-pileser III 35, I 21–35)[33] or the pacific symbol of the shepherd's staff (Ashurbanipal 115, 20). The royal title undoubtedly bears a territorial/cosmic dimension, a democratic one in the sense that the king is committed to his people, and, finally, a religious and cultic dimension. While the matter of protection is indeed important and overlaps with the defensive and aggressive leonine aspects, the pacific asset is more essential to the image of the shepherd. Therefore, it becomes clear that the two images of the lion and the shepherd interact with each other and in this way considerably enrich the positive and forceful representation of sovereignty in Assyrian royal inscriptions.

It is also important to consider the spatiality of the images and their intersection as the lion belongs to steppes and deserts, whereas the shepherd is located in more protected spaces and in charge of domestic animals. Indeed, the absence of the Master of animals is notorious in these textual sources all the more so because it is found in the iconographic records of the time, whereas that of the shepherd has never been identified as such. Is it possible that the iconography of the Master of animals reflect precisely this interaction we have analyzed between the leonine image and that of the shepherd?

---

20 Tiglath-pileser I 01, i 28.
21 Sennacherib 1, 1; 2, 1; 3, 1; 4, 1; 8, 1; 9, 1.
22 Sennacherib 5, 1; 15, i 1; 16, i 1; 17, i 1; 22, i 1.
23 Ashurbanipal 116, 1; 117,1; 118,1; Aššur-etel-ilāni 5, 1.
24 Aššur-etel-ilāni 4, 2.
25 Esarhaddon 104, i 1; 105, i 1; 109, i 1'; 113, 1.
26 Sennacherib 1, 93; 2, 70; 3, 62; 4, 93; 5, 1'; 7, 7'; 8, 19'; 10, 23; 15, viii 19"; 16, viii 64; 17, viii 77; 18, viii 14"'b.
27 See also Esarhaddon 104, vi 1; 105, vii 42b; 110, ii' 1'.
28 Esarhaddon 109, i 13'.
29 Esarhaddon 104, ii 9b; 105, ii 22b; 114, ii 19.
30 Tukulti-Ninurta I 01, i 1; 05, 1; 10, 1; 13, 1; 16, 1.
31 Tukulti-Ninurta I 01, iv 37; 02, 37; 08, 11'; 09, 28'; 23, 85.
32 See also Tukulti-Ninurta I 10, 15; I 23, 1.
33 See also Tiglath-pileser III 35, ii 15'b.

We have thus shown how the images of the lion, the shepherd and the Master of animals interacted in the sources underlying the representation of power in the Assyrian empire. This interaction – it has to be noted – concerns not only the images themselves, the lion as element B, the shepherd as element C, and the Master of animals as element D, but also the nature of the sources, textual and iconographic. For the king as element A or, more precisely, the representation of his sovereignty is brought to a fuller definition through the interaction of sources and, what interests us most here, through metaphorical interaction.

The Lion in Levantine Sources

B.A. Strawn has extensively analyzed the image of the lion in ancient sources and more particularly in the Levant.[34] It thus seems unnecessary in this short contribution to review all the material. Let us recall that the analysis of the lion in the archaeological record of ancient Israel/Palestine from 1500–332 BCE shows the common association of the lion with sovereignty and diverse deities. Thus, the presence of lion artifacts in cultic and official contexts is abundant and displays evidence of artistic connections with other regions. Moreover, the image of the lion as trope of threat and power is relatively stable across the different data. The use of the image in relation with Yhwh is similar in many ways in comparative and archaeological contexts: Yhwh is likened to a lion (Isa 38:13; cf. Lam 3:10) who has broken the bones of Hezekiah. The lion can also become the lion chaser against those who stalk Israel as a lion (Jer 49:19; Jer 50:44). This is a figure of speech to designate Israel's enemies, a picture of pride, strength, and rapacity (Jer 4:7; 5:6; Joel 1:6; Nah 2:12–14). Finally, lions may be sent against lions (2 Kgs 17:25). The use of the lion as an image for the enemy is also similar but somewhat more pronounced in the Hebrew Bible (esp. in the Psa 7:3; 10:9; 17:12; 22:14, 22). Possible explanations are offered by the author for Yhwh's leonine profile. It could stem from the storm-god composite Baal-Seth or, more probably, from the tradition of violent leonine goddesses (especially Sekhmet and Ištar) or, simply from the use of militant lion metaphors in ancient Near Eastern royal inscriptions.

However, B.A. Strawn shows how the use of the lion imagery in relation to the monarch was muted in the biblical text when compared to other and archaeological materials. This has been rightly developed by Hugh Pyper who insists on the glaring biblical omission of the lion as figure of a monarch: there is no celebration of the king as displaying the power of the lion against his enemies, nor of the king as the great protector of his people against lions, real or metaphorical (except maybe the young David as shepherd slaying lions in 1 Sam 17:34–37). Kingly/royal and human power or position are thus never praised in metaphors involving the lion.[35] Obviously this testifies to the highly reworked nature of the biblical text: no human king in the history of Israel is deemed worthy of such metaphor.

34 Strawn 2015, 2009, and 2005, in particular pp. 188–192.

35 This is in turn developed by Pyper 2014.

The Shepherd in Levantine Sources

The image of the shepherd has been so extensively studied that it does not seem necessary here to look at the sources over again.[36] I would like to underline Diana V. Edelman's contribution on the topic from the point of view of rhetorical strategies that might be considered more meaningful in their interactive mode.[37] Four strategies for expressing Israel's enjoyment of a unique relationship with the deity are explored. Let us recall them: 1) Israel as Yhwh's people, nation or treasure that has been chosen, set apart or known; 2) Israel as Yhwh's flock; 3) Israel as Yhwh's garden; and 4) Israel as Yhwh's covenantal vassal/son. These strategies assert and reassure that Israel constitutes a unique group in relation to the deity. Let us take a closer look at the shepherd and flock imagery (cf. Psa 44:12; 74:1; 77:21; 78.52; 79:13; 80:2; 95:7; 100:3; Isa 40:11; Mic 2:12; 7:14.): Israel appears as Yhwh's property and possession. In several passages, the deity is said to scatter his own flock, Israel, or strike it with plague (1 Chron 21:17; Psa 44:11.22; 74:1; Zech 13:7). In these, Yhwh acknowledges Israel as his and himself as the divine shepherd, with or without an appointed human overseer. In Deutero-Isaiah, the people acknowledge they are sheep who have strayed and followed their own path, implicitly rejecting the one specified by their divine shepherd (Isa 53:6). Such disobedience triggers direct divine intervention to chastise the wayward flock, as in Psa 44:11.22 and Psa 74:1. In this case, the sheep themselves must bear responsibility for straying; there is no shepherd who has been lax or inattentive to be punished in their stead. Interestingly, in other passages the scattering is done by another, either a foreign king or a domestic kingly shepherd entrusted with their care, feeding, and protection but who have not carried out their appointed tasks (1 Kgs 22:17 = 2 Chron 18:16; Jer 13:20; Ezek 34:1–34). These passages assume that Yhwh is the only owner of Israel and so controls its fate as well as the fate of those appointed to shepherd it on earth. The interesting point of the analysis is to bring out clearly how the same image can be nuanced in very different narratives and how roles may be exchanged: the good shepherd might not in fact be always so good as he disperses as well as gathers his own property and possession. I would now like to pursue the analysis and bring in the lion metaphor as it is expanded in a particular manner, in interaction with that of the shepherd in the book of Amos.

At this point and in contradistinction to Assyrian sources, the shepherd metaphor in biblical texts is lengthily reworked and not necessarily positive, while the lion metaphor, as we have shown, is absent in relation to human kingship. Certainly, the nature of the sources account for such differences, as Assyrian royal inscriptions are primary sources contrary to biblical texts transmitted over centuries and copied by skillful as well as political scribes. Interestingly biblical scribes did not fear to reflect upon ancient Near Eastern and common royal or divine images: they did not fear in fact to deconstruct them.

36 George 2015; Bailey 2014; Baxter 2011 and 2012; Gan 2007; Laniak 2006; Van Hecke (ed) 2005; Selz 2001; Hunziker-Rodewald 2001; Greer 1999; Derret 1973.

37 Edelman 2016.

The Book of Amos

The first collection of the book of Amos is introduced by verse 2: "And Yhwh said (ויאמר יהוה): from Zion he roars (מציון ישאג), and from Jerusalem he utters his voice; the pastures of the shepherds wither / lament (ואבלו נאות הרעים), and the top of Carmel dries up." We notice at once the association of the images of the lion (through roaring) and of the shepherds (through the pastures). We also notice that after the incipit of the first verse, one might consider verse 2 as opening not only the first collection of oracles but also the whole booklet, so much so that the leonine figure runs through it (1:2; 3:4.8.12; 5:19; 9:3).[38] Even more, as the subject of the verb 'to roar' may have remained undetermined (according to the Massoretic accentuation), the interpretation of the figure is somehow suspended, though the subject, that is, Yhwh is in close relation. Let us follow now the narrative thread of this leonine image before we propose an interactive interpretation of this metaphor and that of the shepherd. The lion reappears again in an oracle of condemnation framed in rhetorical interrogations: "Does a lion roar in the forest, when it has no prey? Does a young lion cry out from its den, if it has caught nothing?" (3:4).

"The lion has roared; who will not fear? The Lord Yhwh has spoken; who can but prophesy?" (3:8).

"Thus says Yhwh: As the shepherd rescues from the mouth of the lion two legs, or a piece of an ear, so shall the people of Israel who live/reign in Samaria be rescued, with the corner of a couch and part[39] of a bed" (3:12).

The announcement of the great tragedy striking Samaria is sustained by the image that has introduced the whole book (1:2) and characterized the oracles of the nations, the image of the lion (3:4.8.12). But whereas the interpretation of the leonine figure could remain open in verse 1:2, it is specified as the subject is now clearly named (3:4.8). Here one can say that the metaphor is extended: if the lion is first named in a comparison of a proverbial type in 3:4, in the course of the rhetorical questions, it is indeed the divine figure that is contemplated: the prey that Israel has become is already in Yhwh's claws and the evil has been done! Verse 3:8 confirms the verdict of the lion-Yhwh but also brings in the figure of the prophet as a roaring one. Moreover, the shepherd comes in as he saves or rather cannot save his flock from the lion (3:12).[40] The indetermination of verse 1:2 is indeed verified as the action of roaring is closely associated not only with the divine subject but also with the prophet.

If these first oracles in the book share common images, their association and the new meaning they take on is all the more striking. Striking, also, is the ironic tone which, little

38 Strawn 2005, 2009 and 2015; Nahkola 2011.

39 See Eidevall 2017, in particular pp. 130–131, 133. Notice that the Septuagint reads 'priests' where the Hebrew reads 'bed' (שרש) and translates "in the city of Damascus" where the parallelism would imply some part of a bed.

40 The image of v. 12 seems to refer to some judicial usage: when a shepherd (pro)claimed his flock to have been attacked, he had to justify the attack to the owner of the flock by showing the animal remains (Exod 22:9–12; cf. Gen 37:29–36. See Hadjiev 2008).

by little, colors them. Indeed, the metaphor of the lion that closely associates that of the shepherd in 3:12 presents this last figure, by definition a figure of protection, as one of failure: if the shepherd saves two legs and a piece of ear, it means that the animal is lost, is dead. It is true however that these 'saved' parties testify to the shepherd that he is not responsible for the loss of the animal, as the Covenant Code makes clear (cf. Exod 22:12). A figure of failure but justified, we could say! What can the shepherd do against the lion? Still, one must underline the use of the verb 'to save' that does point to the fact that all is not lost. The responsibility of the shepherd is engaged but he is not wronged. It is here that the irony creeps into the text, since what has been saved is in fact dead! And this irony continues: "as if someone fled from a lion, and was met by a bear; or went into the house and rested a hand against the wall, and was bitten by a snake" (5:19). The irony is striking and bitter. This time the lion may only terrify its prey, it cannot kill it! But the association or interaction between the lion and the shepherd goes one step further, if one remembers that Amos himself has been defined as a shepherd. The title or function of Amos is given in the opening of the book (עמוס אשר היה בנקדים, 1:1): Amos is *nōqēd*, a term that is usually understood as 'shepherd' or 'breeder', the unique other reference to the term being found in 2 Kgs 3:4 concerning the king of Moab. This understanding, however, is assured from parallels in other Semitic languages, Ugaritic, Akkadian and Arab,[41] as well as by the term *bōqer* found in the narrative of the expulsion of Amos from the sanctuary of Bethel (7:14).[42] In this narrative, Amos explains that he is no prophet, *nabî'*, but herdsman (כי בוקר אנכי), and dresser of sycamore trees: "and Yhwh took me from following the flock" (ויקחני יהוה מאחרי הצאן, 7,5 cf. 2 S 7:8). The image of the shepherd is, as we have just seen, one of strong political and theological implication: kings like divine shepherds are called to conduct and protect their people. In the biblical texts, shepherds of their people, kings and prophets are called by the deity Yhwh, himself the shepherd par excellence (Jer 3:17; 13:17; 23:1–6; 31:10–14; Ezek 34; Hos 13:4–8; *etc.*). There is without doubt a common motif hereby recontextualized in a way that it may constitute nothing less than a critique of the prophetic institution in the time of the monarchy in Israel.[43] However, my purpose here is to insist on the interaction between the leonine metaphor and the shepherd's one along with the interaction between the subjects that are Yhwh and his prophet. By metaphorical play and interaction, the two subjects, Yhwh (A) and Amos (A') are brought into relation with the lion (B), through the actions of roaring and killing, on the one hand, and the shepherd (C), as protector who eventually ends in failure, on the other. In this way, the meaning of the metaphors is not so much in their separate study (A/B; A/C; A'/B; A'/C) but in their interaction (A-A'/B/C). The originality lies in the close association of the

41 See Wilson 2018, specifically p. 319; Craigie 1982.

42 Dijkstra 2001.

43 Schmid 2018 , in particular p. 109: "But the basic problem of institutionally-rooted prophecy becomes clear here, since the expectations imposed upon it can end up determining its content—a situation from which contemporary experts are likewise not immune. (...) The prophet Amos states, "I am no prophet." This statement is only understandable against the sociological background that 2 Kings 22 illustrates. Amos does not deny that he utters prophecies, but he does distance himself from the institutional prophets who provide their expertise about future contingencies."

two subjects as well as in the interaction of the two metaphors that are the lion and the shepherd. Lion's and shepherd's imagery lend their qualities to divine as well as prophetic sovereignty and enrich considerably their representation. The absence of a human monarch in this interaction seems obvious in light of the historical failure of both northern and southern kingdoms. The image depicting the shepherd, whether divine or prophetic, as a failure in the end is very interesting indeed! Biblical scribes in the Book of Amos have made use of common images and metaphors but they have blurred the referent of these images and have deconstructed the intended meaning: when the prey has died with two legs only left, what could anyone do? The effect is of the greatest irony: all intended metaphorical content is lost.

Concluding Remarks

As a conclusion, let us sum up our analysis and results. We have shown how the images of the lion, the shepherd and the Master of animals interacted in Mesopotamian sources making greater sense of the representation of power especially in the Assyrian empire. This interaction concerned the images themselves as well as the nature of the sources, textual and iconographic.

In contradistinction to Assyrian sources, it has been shown how the shepherd metaphor in biblical texts was lengthily reworked and is not necessarily positive, while the lion metaphor is absent in relation to human kingship. Certainly, the nature of the sources account for such differences, as Assyrian royal inscriptions are primary sources contrary to biblical texts transmitted over centuries. However, biblical scribes were not afraid of reflecting upon common royal or divine images, even to the point of ironically deconstructing them as the book of Amos testifies.

Therefore, the force of these metaphors lies in their association: they make full sense in their interactive interpretation, one together with other. This multiplication of sense gives to the representation of power and sovereignty something absolute: not being limited by one unique image and its interpretation, it is enriched by multiple images which interactive interpretation can only add to the cosmic and indeed divine representation of kinship, or not, as in the book of Amos.

Bibliography

Albenda, P. 1972, "Ashurnasirpal II Lion Hunt Relief BM124534", *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 31, 167–178.

—. 1974, "Lions on Assyrian Wall Reliefs", *Journal of the Ancient Near Eastern Society of Columbia University* 6, 1–27.

—. 2008, "Assyrian Royal Hunts: Antlered and Horned Animals from Distant Lands", *Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research* 349, 61–78.

Bailey, K.E. 2014, *The Good Shepherd: A Thousand-Year Journey from Psalm 23 to the New Testament,* Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press.

Baxter, W. 2011, "Matthew, Mark, and the Shepherd Metaphor: Similarities, Differences, and Implications", in: E.M. Becker – A. Runesson (eds), *Mark and Matthew, Comparative Readings: Understanding the Earliest Gospels in their First-century Settings*, Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 263–282.

—. 2012, *Israel's Only Shepherd: Matthew's Shepherd Motif and his Social Setting*, Library of New Testament Studies/Journal for the Study of the New Testament Supplement Series 457, London: T&T Clark.

Cassin, E. 1981, "Le roi et le lion," *Revue de l'histoire des religions* 198, 355–401.

Collins, B.J. 1998, "Hattusili I, the Lion King," *Journal of Cuneiform Studies* 50, 15–20.

Counts, D.B. 2010, "Divine Symbols and Royal Aspirations: The Master of Animals in Iron Age Cypriote Religion", in: D.B. Counts – B. Arnold (eds), *The Master of Animals in Old World Iconography*, Budapest: Archaeolingua Alapítvány, 135–150.

Counts, D.B. – Arnold, B. (eds) 2010, *The Master of Animals in Old World Iconography*, Budapest: Archaeolingua Alapítvány.

Counts, D.B. –Arnold, B. 2010, "Prolegomenon: The Many Masks of the Master of Animals", in: D.B. Counts – B. Arnold (eds), *The Master of Animals in Old World Iconography*, Budapest: Archaeolingua Alapítvány, 9–24.

Craigie, P.C. 1982, "Amos the *noqed* in the Light of Ugaritic", *Studies in Religion / Sciences Religieuses* 11, 29–33.

Derrett, J.D.M. 1973, "The Good Shepherd: St. John's Use of Jewish Halakah and Haggadah", *Studia Theologica* 27, 25–50.

Diamond, E. 2003, "Lions, Snakes, and Asses: Palestinian Jewish Holy Men as Masters of the Animal Kingdom", *Jewish Culture and Society under the Christian Roman Empire*, Leuven: Peeters, 254–284.

Dijkstra, M. 2001, "'I am neither a prophet nor a prophet's pupil': Amos 7:9–17 as the Presentation of a Prophet like Moses", in: J.C. de Moor (ed), *The Elusive Prophet*, Leiden: OTS, 105–128.

Edelman, D.V. 2016, "YHWH's Othering of Israel", in: E. Ben Zvi – D. Edelman (eds), *Imagining the Other and Constructing Israelite Identity in the Early Second Temple Period*, The Library of Hebrew Bible/Old Testament Studies 591, London: T&T Clark, 41–69.

Eidevall, G. 2017, *Amos: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, Anchor Yale Bible 24G, New Haven: Yale University Press.

Gan, J. 2007, *The Metaphor of Shepherd in the Hebrew Bible: A Historical-Literary Reading*, New York: University Press of America.

George, J.C. 2015, *The Metaphor of Shepherd in the Gospel of Mark*, Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang.

Greer, R. 1999, "The Good Shepherd: Canonical Interpretations in the Early Church?", in: B.S. Childs (ed), *Theological Exegesis*, Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 306–330.

Hadjiev, T.S. 2008, "The Context as Means of Redactional Reinterpretation in the Book of Amos", *Journal of Theological Studies* 59, 655–668.

Haubold, J. 2015, "'Shepherds of the People': Greek and Mesopotamian Perspectives", in: R. Rollinger – E. van Dongen (eds), *Mesopotamia in the Ancient World: Impact, Continuities, Parallels, Proceedings of the Seventh Symposium of the Melammu Project held in Obergurgl, Austria, November 4–8, 2013*, Münster: Ugarit-Verlag, 245–254.

Heil, J.P. 2006, "Jesus with the Wild Animals in Mark 1:13", *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 68, 63–78.

Hunziker-Rodewald, R. 2001, *Hirt und Herde. Ein Beitrag zum alttestamentlichen Gottesverständnis*, Beiträge zur Wissenschaft vom Alten und Neuen Testament 155, Stuttgart: Kohlhammer.

Keel, O. – Uehlinger, Ch. 2001, *Dieux, déesses et figures divines: les sources iconographiques de l'histoire de la religion d'Israël*, Paris: Cerf.

Laniak, T.S. 2006, *Shepherds After My Own Heart: Pastoral Traditions and Leadership in the Bible*, Downers Grove: Apollos/InterVarsity Press.

Nahkola, A. 2011, "Amos Animalizing: Lion, Bear and Snake in Amos 5.19", in: A.C. Hagedorn – A. Mein (eds), *Aspects of Amos: Exegesis and Interpretation*, London: T&T Clark, 83–104.

Pyper, H. 2014, "The Lion King: Yahweh as Sovereign Beast in Israel's Imaginary", in: J.L. Koosed (ed), *The Bible and Posthumanism,* Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 59–74.

Schmid, K. 2018, "Prognosis and Postgnosis in Biblical Prophecy", *Scandinavian Journal of the Old Testament* 32, 106–120.

Selz, G.J. 2001, "'Guter Hirte, Weiser Fürst': Zur Vorstellung von Macht und zur Macht der Vorstellung im altmesopotamischen Herrschaftsparadigma", *Altorientalische Forschungen* 28, 8–39.

—. 2018, "Intimate Relations Reconsidering Backgrounds of the Mesopotamian Mistress of the Animals (Ἡ Πότνια Θηρῶν)", in: K. Kaniuth – D. Lau, D. Wicke (eds), *Übergangszeiten. Altorientalische Studien für Reinhard Dittmann anlässlich seines 65. Geburtstags*, marru 1, 143–151.

Seux, M.J. 1967, *Épithètes royales akkadiennes et sumériennes*, Paris: Letouzey&Ané.

Seyer, M. 2006, "The Royal Hunt - The Symbolical Meaning of an Ancient Topos", in: A. Prinz (ed), *Hunting Food - Drinking Wine, Proceedings of the XIX Conference of the International Commission for the Anthropology of Food, Poysdorf, 4.-7. 12.2003*, Wiener ethnomedizinische Reihe 3, Münster: LIT, 71–198.

—. 2007, *Der Herrscher als Jäger: Untersuchungen zur königlichen Jagd im persischen und makedonischen Reich vom 6. - 4. Jahrhundert v. Chr. sowie unter den Diadochen Alexanders des Grossen*, Wiener Forschungen zur Archäologie 11, Wien: Phoibos.

Strawn, B.A. 2005, *What Is Stronger than a Lion?: Leonine Image and Metaphor in the Hebrew Bible and the Ancient Near East*, Orbis Biblicus et Orientalis 212, Fribourg/Göttingen: Academic Press Fribourg/Vandenhoeck&Ruprecht.

—. 2009, "Whence Leonine Yahweh?: Iconography and the History of Israelite Religion", in: M. Nissinen – Ch.E. Carter (eds), *Images and Prophecy in the Ancient Eastern Mediterranean*, Göttingen: Vandenhoeck&Ruprecht, 51–85.

—. 2015, "Lion Hunting in the Psalms: Iconography and Images for God, the Self, and the Enemy", in: I.J. de Hulster – B.A. Strawn – R.P. Bonfiglio (eds), *Iconographic Exegesis of the Hebrew Bible-Old Testament: An Introduction to its Method and Practice*, Göttingen: Vandenhoeck&Ruprecht, 245–261.

Van Hecke, P. 2005, "Pastoral Metaphors in the Hebrew Bible and its Ancient Near Eastern Context", in: R.P. Gordon – J.C. de Moor (eds), *The Old Testament in its World*, Leiden: Brill, 200–217.

Watanabe, C.E. 1998, "Symbolism of the Royal Lion Hunt in Assyria", in: J. Prosecky (ed), *Intellectual Life of the Ancient Near East*, Praha: Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic Oriental Institute, 439–450.

—. 2000, "The Lion Metaphor in the Mesopotamian Royal Context", *Topoi suppl*. 2, 399–409.

Wilson, R.R. 2018, "Prophecy and the State in 8th-Century Israel: Amos and Hosea", in: C.A. Rollston (ed), *Enemies and Friends of the State: Ancient Prophecy in Context*, Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 313–328.

Online resources

The Royal Inscriptions of Assyria online (RIAo) Project: http://oracc.museum.upenn.edu/riao/

To Serve Woman: Jezebel, Anat, and the Metaphor of Women as Food*

Esther Brownsmith (Brandeis University)

I begin with two quotations that feature the Semitic hollow root Ṣ-D, 'to hunt prey'. The first is from Aqhat,[1] said to the goddess Anat: "The bow is a warrior's [weapon]; do women now go hunting (Ṣ-D)?". It establishes Aqhat's gender norms: according to him, women like her should not go hunting. But the second quotation is from Proverbs 6:26 concerning adultery: "A prostitute is worth a loaf of bread, but a man's wife goes hunting (תָּצוּד, Ṣ-D) for precious life." Some women *do* hunt – but they are adulteresses, and their prey is the men they sleep with. In contrast, prostitutes are a relatively acceptable alternative, associated with a benign loaf of bread.[2]

These quotes encapsulate examples of two kinds of women in ancient Levantine social norms: those who hunt men, and those who are consumed by men. The latter image is a well-attested metaphor in the Bible, but this paper is primarily interested in the other category of women – those who break metaphoric expectations by consuming food instead of becoming food. One of those women is Anat; the other is Queen Jezebel. Through their intertwined stories, we can more closely examine the central importance of metaphorically conceptualizing women as food, and the bloody consequences of subverting the metaphor. Both Jezebel and Anat are powerful and violent female figures, yet their fates diverge dramatically; Anat remains a perpetually young and triumphant goddess, while Jezebel is murdered and eaten by dogs.

---

* This is the expanded version of a paper presented at the 2019 RAI Conference in the section, "Researching Metaphor in the Ancient Near East: Perspectives from Texts and Images." My thanks to Marta Pallavidini and Ludovico Portuese for organizing an excellent session. This paper represents a modified excerpt from my forthcoming dissertation, *Inconspicuous Consumption: Conceptual Metaphors of Women as Food in the Deuteronomistic History*.

1 KTU 1.17 VI 39–40: *qštm [...]mḫrm. / ḫt.ṣḏn.tintt [bḥ].*

2 Technically, the Proverbs quotation is not a metaphor; the prostitute is *worth* a bread loaf, not *like* a bread loaf. However, this distinction is less clear than it might seem. The Hebrew term for worth (דַּעַב) is a *hapax legomenon* in this particular sense, and even if it does mean 'value, exchange rate', it still evokes a metaphoric association – just as saying that a woman "is worth precious jewels" associates her with the beauty of those jewels, not just their monetary cost. As support for this association, the Targum for this verse says that the prostitute is comparable to (ימד) the bread, the Aramaic cognate of Hebrew המד – to be likened to something.

On Realized Metaphors

Before turning to the narratives, I will make a brief theoretical distinction. Most metaphor study has been conducted on linguistic metaphor, e.g. "My spirits are high today." As Lakoff and Johnson demonstrated in *Metaphors We Live By*, these linguistic metaphors reflect an underlying conceptual metaphor – in this case, happiness is up. But conceptual metaphors can also manifest in non-linguistic ways, such as visual images, sounds, and narrative elements. It is this last category that most concerns me. When a metaphor is expressed with a vehicle that is literally true within the narrative, it becomes a *realized metaphor*.[3]

> *Example 1:*
>
> In the sentence, "the memories of my father haunt me", the speaker uses the conceptual metaphor, unfinished business is a ghost. But in the play *Hamlet*, a literal ghost appears to convict Hamlet of his father's unfinished business – a *realization* of the metaphor.[4]

Realized metaphors are most common in supernatural or surrealist literary contexts, but they occur in a subtler form throughout all literature. While realized metaphors have not been studied extensively within ancient Near Eastern literature, numerous examples exist – both of straightforward realized metaphors and of their inversion. For an example of the latter, I turn briefly to the book of Jonah.

> *Example 2:*
>
> A common biblical conceptual metaphor is faithful behavior is a journey, which appears in countless linguistic instances.[5] Knowing this metaphor of "following God", then, an audience would find it perfectly fitting that Jonah disobeyed God's calling by hopping on a ship and literally traveling in the opposite direction

3 As Erickson explains it, "Here we have an example of what the Russian Formalists labeled 'realization of metaphor': the metaphor's secondary frame of reference is posited as existing within the textual world, where it would usually only be considered present within the reader's imagination" (Erickson 2009, 18). Cho (2019) discusses this technique in terms of Ricoeur's theories of metaphor, which develop from Aristotelian concepts like *muthos* [plot]. When Cho emphasizes that "the *muthos* of a literary work can be a metaphor for the world outside literature" (*ibid*.,30), he is referring to the phenomenon of realized metaphors. In this paper, for the sake of simplicity, I use the language of realized metaphors rather than Ricoeur's terminology, sacrificing the nuance and flexibility of the latter.

4 Cf. the discussion in Erickson 2009, 2–4 for further discussion of this specific realized metaphor.

5 For example, Ps. 119 begins, "Happy are those whose way is blameless, who walk in the law of the LORD." Occurrences of this metaphor are too frequent to count; TWOT notes that "The expression *hlk ʾaḥ*^{a}*rê* 'to follow after' is immediately and fully comprehensible to Israelites conversant with nomadic life and can consequently be used to describe the totality of the communal and individual life-style" and provides numerous examples (*TWOT*, דלה).

(Jonah 1:3). In this realized metaphor, Jonah is refusing to follow God's path in the most literal sense, and negative consequences naturally follow.

As this example illustrates, realized metaphors play upon well-established, even "dead", metaphors; by reflecting a metaphor already established in the audience's mind, they can make plot elements seem natural and expected.

Now I focus on one specific metaphor: woman is food. This metaphor is abundant in English, where we call women "tarts" or "cheesecakes", and it has been studied in various languages and manifestations.[6] In the Bible, we see this metaphor when the man in Song of Songs calls his lover's body "a paradise of pomegranates" (פַּרְדֵּס רִמּוֹנִים, Song 4:13), among many culinary metaphors.[7] I have argued elsewhere for its realized appearance in passages such as Judges 19, where the Levite's unfortunate concubine is objectified, dismembered, and metaphorically consumed as fuel for revenge, using language that evokes meat butchery.

Outside the Bible, in the ancient Near East, culinary metaphors for women abound in the linguistic realm; for instance, in an Old Babylonian love poem, the male lover describes his beloved: "Like honey, she is sweet to the nose; like wine, [her] mood is fruity freshness."[8] For an example of the metaphor realized in narrative, I turn to a portion of in the Ugaritic text KTU 1.23, the so-called Feast of the Goodly Gods.[9] The god Ilu has been walking on the beach when he encounters two women and is aroused by their behavior.[10] In response, he engages in some curious archery and cookery.

Example 3: KTU 1.23.37–39

Ilu has pulled out his "staff";	ỉl . ḫṯh . nḥt
Ilu has palmed the "rod" with his hand.	ỉl . ymnn . mṭ . ydh
Raising it, he shoots skyward:	yšḏ . yr . šmmh

6 See, for instance, Hines 1999; Weingarten 2009; Crespo-Fernández 2015, 153–161; López Rodríguez 2008.

7 For discussion of the culinary metaphors in Song of Songs, cf. especially Brenner 1999, but also Hunt 2008; Meredith 2018; Munro 1995, especially chapter 3.

8 CUSAS 10 8:7–9: *ki-ma di-iš-pi-im ṭa-ba-at a-na ap!-pi-i-im ki-ma ka-ra-nim eš-ši-et in-bi ka-ab-ta-tu*. Of the latter line, George notes: "just as wine's ripe fruitiness makes it good to drink, so the girl's newly mature 'fruits' create around her an irresistible sexual allure. Fruit and gardens are stock metaphors for genitals, sexual attraction and desire in Babylonian and other ancient Near Eastern love poetry." (George 2009, 52).

9 The lengthiest discussion of this text is Smith 2006, but see also Scurlock 2011 and Pardee 2003.

10 The exact nature of that behavior is unclear and much-debated. The women are called *mšt'ltm*, a word for which various etymologies have been proposed (cf. Smith 2006, 74–76 for an overview). I concur with Pardee 2003, who reads it as a Št participle of the verb *'ly*, but come to a different conclusion of its sense: as he notes, the Š of *'ly* can mean 'to mount sexually' so the reflexive participle could mean 'women who mount each other sexually'. The rest of their actions align with this meaning: Ilu watches as they move up and down, "head to 'basin'" (*l rỉš . ảgn*). After witnessing their mutual oral sex, Ilu's arousal is immediate.

he has shot a bird from the sky!	yr . b šmm . ʿṣr
Plucking it, he puts it on the embers:	yḫṛṭ yšt . l pḥm
in this way, Ilu seduces[11] the women.	il . ảṯtm . k ypt

When Ilu aims his "staff" at the sky to shoot down a bird, plucks it, and eats it, the actions are both narrative and metaphorical; he is showing the women an innuendo-laden metaphor of what he wishes to do to them. In short, the conceptual metaphor woman is food was well-known to the ancient Levantine mind, and we see it manifested both linguistically and in narrative realization. Through this lens, then, I will analyze two ancient female characters – Jezebel and Anat – whose stories intersect with food in numerous and complex ways.

Jezebel, the Eaten Eater

Jezebel's characterization in the Bible comes from a handful of passages, and primarily from two texts: the story of Naboth's vineyard, and the story of her death.[12] These tales take place at two very different points – and through inverted metaphorical lenses. Yet even before those stories, the narrator sets the scene in in 1 Kgs 18:19, when we hear of "the four hundred fifty prophets of Baal, and the four hundred prophets of Asherah, who eat at Jezebel's table."

Superficially, this simply indicates that Jezebel provided for their wellbeing; "they were the queen's subsidized clergy."[13] Yet every other reference to guests eating at a ruler's table

11 "The use of *pt(y)* here, if correctly analyzed as cognate with Heb. *pth*, denotes the act of a male convincing a woman to engage in sexual activity" (Pardee 2003, 281). Cf. Smith 2006, 85–88 for a summary of various analyses of this passage, which are "quite divided" between assuming metaphorical sexual activity and assuming literal preparation of a ritual aphrodesiac. Reading the passage as a realized metaphor, of course, the answer is "both/and": it is both a description of narrative action *and* of metaphorical eroticism.

12 A note about dating: in general, the stories about Jezebel were once commonly considered to be early, pre-Deuteronomistic tales utilized by the Deuteronomist (cf. Cogan 1974; Campbell and O'Brien 2000). In 1998, however, Rofé wrote a persuasive historical-philological reexamination of the Naboth story that noted various inconsistencies. Rofé concludes that the vineyard story was written much later, in the "5th or 4th century", when two of the central political issues were the danger of foreign wives and oppression by nobles (סִירִס), as seen in Ezra-Nehemiah. The tale of Naboth's vineyard thus casts its villains as an archetypical Foreign Wife, who enlists the local nobles (סִירִס) to do her dirty work (Rofé 1998). Cronauer extended a similar argument in his 2005. Indeed, his examination of scholarship on the Naboth story is so comprehensive that this article does not reduplicate it, but the reader is referred there for an extensive discussion of the historical-critical debate over the text (see Cronauer 2005). While I find Rofé and Cronauer persuasive, my most important historical-critical assumption is that the various Jezebel stories were written by the same author, and therefore can be analyzed in light of one another.

13 Montgomery and Gehman 1951, 300.

refers to kings, such as David or Solomon.[14] The reference to Jezebel here is thus highly unexpected. It takes the common Deuteronomistic idiom of eating at a king's table and twists it: in Ahab's Israel, the foreign queen has so much sway that she has usurped presiding over the royal table. While dining was probably a metonym for provisions broader than mere food,[15] it nonetheless focuses the reader's attention on the role of eating in royal favor. Thus, Jezebel is portrayed remarkably from an early point, as someone who unusually provides food for others – even usurping the role of her husband the king.

She continues this behavior in the story of Naboth. The tale begins with a contrast of food: specifically, Naboth's ancestral vineyard, compared to Ahab's proposed vegetable garden. As Appler explores at length, the vineyard is a classic metaphorical representation of Israel, whereas gardens are status symbols for kings.[16] In particular, a vegetable garden had associations as an Egyptian luxury, much better suited to a climate with ample water to grow its cucumbers and garlic.[17] When Ahab's desire for such a garden is thwarted, he responds by refusing food petulantly: if he cannot grow vegetables in Naboth's plot, then he will not eat at all. In response, Jezebel chides him for not eating (1 Kgs 21:5), then demands that he get up and begin to eat; again, her role is to provide food. In her study, Shemesh notes that the structure of her demand, using the imperative verb קום, is a familiar form that usually appears when God is commanding a leader to arise and act.[18] In other words, Jezebel is taking on the role of a deity with relation to Ahab.

Ironically, Jezebel solves Ahab's food-production problem by declaring a fast – normally an indicator of tense times, perhaps implying an unnamed crisis that could be blamed on Naboth.[19] But as a public gathering with ritualized norms, it serves some of the social roles of a feast, and indeed this "feast" has a "main course": Naboth, unjustly accused of blasphemy, who is publicly killed to satisfy God's purported demands. Finally, Jezebel can provide the land to her husband, who goes to take possession – only to be held accountable by the prophet Elijah. Elijah pronounces doom for Ahab and his people, but he has a special curse for Jezebel: she herself will be eaten by dogs. And how does Ahab respond to these prophecies? By, once again, fasting. His wife has provided illicit food for him, so he gives up eating in hope of forgiveness.

In this story, we see Jezebel at the height of her power, procuring a blood-stained food source for her mate. Yet in the eyes of an audience used to equating women with consumed food, her behavior would seem exponentially unethical – not only was a man falsely executed for the sake of a vegetable plot, but the deed was done by a woman.[20] While

14 The idiom appears in 1 Kgs 2:7, 1 Kgs 18:19, 2 Sam 9:7,10,11,13, and 2 Sam 19:29, plus a related form in 2 Kgs 25:29.
15 Cf. Gray 1963, 61; Cogan and Tadmore 1988, 174.
16 Appler 2004, 93–101.
17 Cf. Deut 11:10, Num 11:5. Seow notes that the change from auspicious vineyard to Egyptian garden is "ominous" (Seow 1999, 155).
18 Shemesh 2015, 125.
19 Cf. Cogan and Tadmore 1988, 479; Seow 1999, 156.
20 Compare Judg 4:9, where Barak's military victory is diminished because a woman helped achieve it.

there are appropriate venues for women to feed men in the Bible,[21] those venues do not involve the woman going out and killing prey in order to acquire the food. Women can be hostesses, but not huntresses.

Thus, using this metaphor as a lens, Elijah's prophecy that "the dogs will eat Jezebel" comes as "poetic justice" to the reader.[22] And indeed, in 2 Kings 9, we see it come true. Carol Adams identifies three stages of the cycle in which meat or women are consumed. "A subject first is viewed, or objectified, through metaphor. Through fragmentation the object is severed from its ontological meaning. Finally, consumed, it exists only through what it represents. The consumption of the referent reiterates its annihilation as a subject of importance in itself."[23] Each of these stages occurs to Jezebel in turn.

Jezebel's Objectification

Jezebel's objectification actually begins even before she enters the scene. With her husband Ahab dead, her son Joram rules Israel, and the usurper Jehu meets him in Jezreel, only to engage in the time-honored tradition of insulting his opponent's mother (2 Kgs 9:22).

מָה הַשָּׁלוֹם עַד־זְנוּנֵי אִיזֶבֶל אִמֶּךָ וּכְשָׁפֶיהָ הָרַבִּים	"What harmony could exist while the whoredoms and many witchcrafts of your mother Jezebel endure?"

These accusations are strange, for despite the anti-Jezebel bias of the final text of Kings, we have no evidence of Jezebel engaging in sexual infidelity or sorcerous behavior. In-

21 E.g. Abigail's provisions (1 Sam 25), or Wisdom's feast in Prov 9.

22 In his groundbreaking work Flesch argues that the timeless appeal of fiction hinges on a concept called "altruistic punishment": the desire to harm someone for their perceived violation of fairness, even at a cost to ourselves. Altruistic punishment, he argues, is evolutionarily desirable, as the whole population benefits when some people are "punishers." As a result, "we instinctively approve of what altruistic punishers do", and they comprise a very large proportion of our fictional protagonists, including "almost any modern detective; and almost any modern superhero" (Flesch 2007, 52). The act (or anticipation) of altruistic punishment motivates our emotional responses to the narrative: "We ourselves can't reward or punish the character we want to see rewarded or punished, but we can cheer on the altruistic character who does – and the storyteller who arranges these things as well" (*Ibid*., 156). This process of "vindication and vindictiveness" – i.e. the exoneration of prosocial actors and the punishment of antisocial actors – is, Flesch argues, central to fiction: "all narratives of vindication give pleasure, and … narrative is only narrative if it allows us to anticipate vindication." He supports his point with a broad array of data, both psychological and literary, and his argument is persuasive. It has clear implications for the Jezebel narrative: through her duplicitous killing of Naboth, Jezebel establishes herself as an antisocial character, one who cannot be trusted to act fairly; the reasonableness of Naboth's refusal only makes her behavior more vile. As a result, the reader craves a fitting vengeance upon the evil queen, and Jehu becomes our "altruistic punisher" – the hero who comes in to right the violation of fairness.

23 Adams 1990, 73.

stead, this combination of terms functions to objectify her into a stereotype of dangerous femininity, using language easily recognizable from prophetic texts. I now examine the two accusations in turn.

Prostitution and infidelity, both signified by the Hebrew root זנה, are in the word's original sense a behavior practiced only by women.[24] But through metaphoric association, particularly in the Bible's legal and prophetic texts, the term זנה came to have a second common meaning: religious apostasy.[25] Therefore, the most simplistic explanation of this passage is that by accusing Jezebel of whoredom, Jehu has accused her of practicing the foreign religious practices of her Phoenician origins.[26] But such an explanation does not sufficiently appreciate the gendered associations of the term. The *only* places where the verb זנה refers to individual acts, as opposed to a generalized group's behavior, are instances with a real or metaphorical woman as the subject.[27] In other words, prostitution may sometimes metaphorically mean apostasy, but it occurs only in a collective sense with this meaning; an individual male apostate is never described with זנה. Thus, to accuse an individual woman of prostitution/זנה would be understood as signifying more than simple religious infidelity.[28] Bembry's analysis of the word concurs: "when זְנוּנִם is used of one particular woman and there is no mention of deities, it seems that the meaning is not metaphorical."[29]

This trend continues with the other accusation. כְּשָׁף is a fairly rare Hebrew word, but it corresponds to the ubiquitous Akkadian *kišpu*, or sorcery. Just as Akkadian incantations against witchcraft, such as Maqlu, primarily focused on female practitioners,[30] so do biblical instances of the term; all of its five appearances are practiced by a woman, real or metaphorical.[31] In fact, in Nahum 3:4, the two accusations are again linked, this time as the primary crimes of the personified city Nineveh, "who has bartered nations through

24 Bird 1989, 224.

25 *Ibid*.

26 Most major commentaries take this stance, e.g. Hobbs 1985, 116–117; Cogan and Tadmore 1988, 110. The latter argue that "'harlotry' expresses the contempt in which Israel held pagan practice, seen as suffused with improper sex and magic" – thus associating the sexuality with an unnamed religion rather than with a named woman.

27 ז-הנז appears only five times in the Bible in the masculine singular Qal (excluding Ezek 23:43, where the Qere is plural). These instances are either essentially plural meanings with a group or nation as the subject (Deut 31:16; Ezek 6:9; Ps 73:27) or metaphors where the nation of Israel takes a masculine verb, despite being portrayed metaphorically as a woman (Hos 4:15; Hos 9:1).

28 Compare Bird: "The men are accused of cultic impropriety, the women of sexual impropriety" (Bird 1989, 232).

29 Bembry 2018, 535.

30 Abusch notes, "Although lists of witches include both male and female forms, the witch is usually depicted as a woman" (Abusch 2015, 4). Stol concurs: "ordinary people imagined the perpetrator to be a woman, and the Neo-Babylonian laws say that a woman is concerned with witchcraft" (Stol 2016, 391).

31 Aside from 2 Kings 9, the people accused of causing וְּשֵׁכ are "daughter Chaldea" (Isaiah 47:9,12); "daughter Zion" (Micah 5:10; cf. Mic. 4:10,13); and a feminine-personified Nineveh (Nah. 3:4). Admittedly, the verb רשׁכ is also sometimes used of men, but וְּשֵׁכ as a noun is solely the domain of women.

her harlotries and clans with her witchcrafts (הַמֹּכֶרֶת גּוֹיִם בְּזְנוּנֶיהָ וּמִשְׁפָּחוֹת בְּכְשָׁפֶיהָ)." Assyria's true crimes, as described in the surrounding passage, were neither prostitution nor witchcraft, but military ruthlessness. However, the two gendered terms in combination invoked a stereotyped image of the Bad, Foreign Woman, whose crimes are seductive and insidious. We see a similar linkage in an Old Babylonian letter from the Mari archives, in which a queen was sent through the divine river ordeal to answer multiple accusations: "if your lady did sorcery against Yarkab-Addu, her lord; [or if she] sent out word from the palace, and another man opened the thighs of your lady."[32] Once again, witchcraft and sexual infidelity are central to female wrongdoing.

We thus see that Jezebel's description stereotypes her as a dangerous, seductive woman in a way that runs deeper than mere foreign religion. Jehu – and through Jehu, the author – is, in fact, engaging in Adams's first step of objectification, in which a living being is reduced to a functional object. Put differently, the conceptual blend proposed by the text includes the trait of "sexual object." Indeed, sexualization is one of the most pervasive ways of objectifying women, and we see it here with Jezebel as her death looms near: she is reduced to a stereotype of sex and magic.

But just in case Jehu's accusations were insufficient, the text turns to Jezebel herself a few verses later and depicts her in the process of beautification, painting her eyes and arranging her hair (2K 9:30). As many have noted, this brings to mind the "naughty woman"[33] of prophetic metaphor. This narrative pause from the military action seems unexpected,[34] until we consider that it helps reinforce Jezebel's objectification; like the prostitute she was accused of being, she is concerned primarily with her appearance. In "Jézabel: Généalogie d'une *Femme Fatale*", Anne Létourneau argues persuasively that "la sexualisation est l'un des principaux procédés mis en œuvre pour produire une altérisation radicale de Jézabel comme l'Autre à abattre, surtout en 2 R 9,30–37."[35] By portraying Jezebel as a *femme fatale*, in Létourneau's words, she is objectified as a potential object for consumption.

This connects back to the parallel accusation of witchcraft and harlotry in Nahum. In that passage, the metaphorical prostitute is punished by public exposure of her genitalia. Duane Christensen calls this punishment her "just desserts"[36] – a punishment that

---

32 ARM 26:249.37–41: "*šum-ma ki-iš-pí be-le-et-ki a-na ia-ar-ka-ab-*^{d}IM *be-lí-ša [i]-pu-šu a-wa-at é-kál-lim ú-še-ṣú-ú ù ša-nu-um ša-[pa]-ar be-el-ti-ki [ip]-[tu]-ú*". These are either two accusations or three. Heimpel (LKM p. 273) and Durand (ARM 26 p.529) read them as three questions: one about witchcraft, one about divulging confidential palace information, and one about infidelity. I am inclined to read them as two questions, with the conjunction "*u*" indicating causation: Amat-Sakkanim sent out a summons, which invited a sexual liaison. In either case, the witchcraft and sexual infidelity are clearly central to her accusation.

33 Montgomery and Gehman 1951, 403.

34 Brueggemann notes, "Unlike the terse account of vv. 27–29, here the narrator warms to the subject and leads the reader into every savored detail concerning this queen whom we are to despise" (Brueggemann 2000, 387).

35 "Sexualization is one of the principle methods implemented to produce a radical othering/alienating of Jezebel as the Other to be slaughtered, especially in 2 Kings 9:30–37" (Létourneau 2014, 209, translation mine).

36 Christensen 2009, 344.

fits the crime of promiscuity – and indeed we see such sexual humiliation as a common punishment for metaphorical prostitution in biblical prophecy,[37] whether or not it had a historical basis.[38] But for Jezebel, her ultimate crime was illicit consumption, so her "just dessert" is to be consumed.[39] The same principle of ironically appropriate punishment is applied, but to a different end.

Jezebel's Fragmentation

We see Adams's second stage of fragmentation, or dismemberment, take place next – first narratively, then literally. The narrative's glimpses of Jezebel – her eyes, her hair, her face framed by the window – begin to dismember her into individual body parts, rather than a whole person. Indeed, this is the narrative function of the window. As Exum says of Michal's window-watching in 2 Sam 6, "the text provides our window on Michal, offering us only a glimpse, the kind of view a window gives, limited in range and perspective. We are, as it were, outside, watching her, inside, watching David."[40] So with Jezebel: by framing her in a window, the text begins to fragment her into a partial body, a "glimpse" of a person.[41]

The window conceals the woman's body while revealing her deliberately styled hair and face, reducing her to attractive body parts (one is reminded of Magritte's several Surrealist paintings that "dismembered female anatomy",[42] such as his two versions of *L'evidence eternelle* [*The Eternally Obvious*, 1930, 1948] and *Le Viol* [*The Rape,* 1934], which re-

37 E.g. Jeremiah 13:26; Ezekiel 16:37–38, 23:10, 29; Hosea 2:12; Lamentations 1:8–9.

38 Anchor-Yale Dictionary, "Adultery", p. 84: "It should be noted that the biblical texts alluding to divorce, public stripping, and mutilation contain prophetic metaphors and hence they are not dependable sources for actual Israelite legal practice. (...) Obviously the de facto procedure for the prosecution of adultery is uncertain."

39 "[T]hese attracting details are there to convey the message that such a powerful and assertive woman deserves what is coming to her" (McKinlay 2002, 307).

40 Exum 1993, 47.

41 This point may, at first, seem in tension with Ackerman's argument. She connects biblical passages of women in windows (including Jezebel) with the Levantine archaeological motif of the goddess in the window, empowering the queen mother by comparing her to a goddess (Ackerman 1998, 155ff.). Here Ackerman follows others who have connected Jezebel to these goddess images, including Beach 1993, and Ackroyd 1983.Aschkenasy shares this view, arguing that Jezebel's appearance "recaptures for the last time her godlike splendor", thus "reasserting her status as the goddess of fertility and birth" (Ashkenasy 1998, 15–16). However, as Pienaar notes, "The meaning of this depiction [i.e. women in windows] is not clear" (Pienaar 2008, 56). Schroer concurs and finds it "difficult to locate in detail the identity of the woman and thus the meaning of the motif" (Schroer 2014, 156) while Gansell identifies them as "elite, sequestered women" who simultaneously evoked inaccessible purity and seductive harlotry (Gansell, 2014, 64) – an impressive but somewhat confusing attempt to combine the various streams of analysis. In short, beyond the tired associations of "fertility" and "beauty" that attach to any iconographic depiction of women, the meaning of the fenestrated women is unclear. What *is* clear is the distance and dissociation that the window provides.

42 Soby 1965, 14.

places a woman's face with her torso, substituting breasts for eyes and vulva for mouth).[43] Whether these faces belong to a goddess, a queen, or a prostitute, they represent the fragmentation of that woman into her constituent parts.

As with so much of Jezebel's story, the alluded and metaphorical soon become manifested reality. On Jehu's command, eunuchs seize Jezebel and throw her down from the upper floor. At that point, her dismemberment becomes very literal; horses trample her and dogs tear into her flesh, leaving behind only a few detached body parts. We see her skull, her feet, and her palms (v. 35): in other words, the external extremities. There is no trace of, for instance, the heart or liver, which symbolized internal thoughts and emotions.[44] Jezebel has been stripped of her animating force, just as one might disembowel an animal corpse in the process of butchering it. The once-powerful woman is reduced to pieces of bony meat.

Jezebel's Consumption

The final stage of eating is consumption, or annihilation: the stage at which the consumed object becomes nothing more than sustenance for others, emphasizing its secondary, unimportant status. Again, we see this take place both narratively and literally. In the narrative, Jehu goes into the palace that Jezebel just occupied and eats a meal. The Hebrew here, stripped of its later versification, actually allows for a gruesome possibility: "some of her blood spattered on the wall and the horses, and they[45] trampled her, and he came,[46] and he ate, and he drank" (vv. 33–34). By leaving out a mention of entering the palace for his meal, only our sense of propriety prevents us from reading that Jehu is eating and drinking the body and blood of Jezebel's corpse. (I am not arguing for literal cannibalism here – merely noting that the text's gaps evoke the possibility). Regardless, the two events are clearly paralleled: "While her blood is splattering on the wall, (...) Jehu is filling his stomach. As his horses trample Jezebel, he drinks in her house. (....) The body of Jezebel has been devoured while Jehu was himself devouring her food in her house."[47]

Finally, after Jehu finishes eating, he shows a belated interest in respect for the dead, noting that the "cursed woman" was "daughter of a king" (v. 34). Yet even this apparent title of honor is part of the process of annihilation. Jezebel – queen and queen mother in

43 Cf. the extensive discussion of this painting from a feminist lens in Gubar 1987.

44 Cf. Smith 1998, who surveys the various body parts connected to emotional expression in the Bible – all internal organs, with the possible exception of the nose as a site for anger.

45 Or "and *he* trampled her" if we follow the MT. While most manuscripts have a plural verb here, the singular verb of Jehu trampling her body emphasizes his gruesome complicity; it is, to quote Cogan and Tadmore, "the more striking reading" (1988, 112).

46 "Came" (Hebrew אוב) most often has a sense of entering a different space. If so here, then the space he enters could have been the prophesied "plot" (קלח) where she died (as referenced in v. 36).

47 Cohn 2000, 70.

her own right – is reduced to a "daughter of a king", an absent referent defined by relationship to a man.[48]

Having negated her identity, Jehu calls for the burial of her corpse. This odd request (the only place in the Deuteronomistic History that concerns a woman's burial) serves as a prelude to a pseudo-Deuteronomistic prophecy fulfillment: just as Elijah prophesied, so has Jezebel been killed.

Fulfilled prophecy	*Prior prophecy*
בְּחֶלֶק יִזְרְעֶאל יֹאכְלוּ הַכְּלָבִים אֶת־בְּשַׂר אִיזֶבֶל: In the plot of Jezreel, the dogs will eat the flesh of Jezebel (2 Kgs 9:36b)	הַכְּלָבִים יֹאכְלוּ אֶת־אִיזֶבֶל בְּחֵל יִזְרְעֶאל The dogs will eat Jezebel in the ramparts[49] of Jezreel (1 Kgs 21:23)
וְהָיְתָה [וַיִּהְיְתָה] נִבְלַת אִיזֶבֶל כְּדֹמֶן עַל־פְּנֵי הַשָּׂדֶה בְּחֶלֶק יִזְרְעֶאל And the corpse of Jezebel will be like dung upon the field in the plot of Jezreel (2 Kgs 9:37a)	וְנֶפֶלָה נִבְלַת הָאָדָם כְּדֹמֶן עַל־פְּנֵי הַשָּׂדֶה And the human corpse[s] will fall like dung upon the field (Jer 9:21)
אֲשֶׁר לֹא־יֹאמרוּ זֹאת אִיזֶבֶל so that no one can/will say, "This is Jezebel" (2 Kgs 9:37b)	וְאֶת־אִיזֶבֶל יֹאכְלוּ הַכְּלָבִים בְּחֶלֶק יִזְרְעֶאל וְאֵין קֹבֵר As for Jezebel, the dogs will eat her in the plot of Jezreel, and no one will bury [her] (2 Kgs 9:10)

This "prophecy" is a pastiche of other prophecies – two of Jezebel's death, plus a possibly Jeremianic[50] idiom – that emphasizes Jezebel as a fully consumed food product.[51] The comparison to dung is a twofold reference; it probably represents a pun on Jezebel's name (as *zbl* was a term for dung in Aramaic and later Hebrew),[52] but it also represents the final aftermath of consumption: "Jezebel is literally consumed, digested, and excreted out of

48 I credit Guest (2016, 58) for this insight. Pruin, who assigns the various Jezebel texts to different periods, makes the inverse observation: "Erst in dem letzten Stadium der Überlieferung gewinnt damit Isebel ihre auffallend großen Machtbefugnisse und wird - anders als in den älteren Texten - weder Mann noch Vater zugeordnet" (Pruin 2006, 308).

49 לח ('ramparts') is probably an orthographic error for קלח, 'plot'.

50 Compare Jeremiah 9:21: "And the human corpse[s] will fall like dung upon the field."

51 O'Brien says that this description is "probably made up of traditional sayings" (1989, 200).

52 Cf. Pruin 2006, 217–218; Graetz 2017. *Zbl* as dung is not attested in the Hebrew Bible, but it appears in Arabic and Aramaic – indeed, the Targum uses *zbl* to translate the term 'dung' in this verse, emphasizing the pun (Cogan 1988, 113). Graetz claims that the term also has parallels in Akkadian and Ugaritic (2017, 7), but I have been unable to locate any; Montgomery and Gehman say it is present in "Arab. and Akk. (?)" (1951, 291).

Israel".[53] But the most brutal phrase is the one that is essentially unparallelled elsewhere: "no one can/will say, 'This is Jezebel'." This devastating fate represents complete annihilation[54] – one of the deepest fears of the ancient Near Eastern mind, in which royal monuments strove above all else to preserve the monarch's memory and name.[55]

Thus, the cycle of consumption is complete. Having been objectified into less than human, fragmented into pieces, and finally annihilated, Jezebel disappears from the narrative; her name never appears again in the Deuteronomistic History.

Anat the Huntress

As I have demonstrated, Jezebel's two primary stories show her in contrasting lights: first as the consumer and procurer of food, then as the consumed. Next, I turn to a subject that has already been observed by multiple commentators: the parallels between Jezebel and the goddess Anat.[56] After reviewing some of the grounds previously explored by others, I add my own additional parallels, especially focusing on Anat as huntress and provider.

Anat was a Canaanite goddess whom we know primarily through Ugaritic texts. Her most extensive depictions are in the Epic of Baal and the Aqhat Epic, but she also appears in more fragmentary texts, some of which have hotly debated meanings.[57] A violent hunter and warrior, Anat's primary epithet is *batulatu*, connected to the Hebrew term בתולה, which means something like 'adolescent female'. Scholars have primarily noted connections between Jezebel and Anat in the story of Jezebel's death. Just as Jezebel beautifies herself before confronting Jehu,[58] so does Anat beautify herself before and after battle in the Baal Cycle, in KTU 1.3 ii-iii.[59] Certain body parts figure prominently in both texts: Jezebel's corpse is reduced to skull (גלגלת), hands (כף), and feet (רגל), while Anat adorns

53 Appler 2004, 6.

54 "She is removed from the history of Israel with no visible trace, not to be honored, not to be remembered" (Brueggemann 2000, 390).

55 "[C]ommemoration served both commoner and elite alike by offering the possibility of averting the relegation of one's deeds or personhood to *eternal anonymity* or the dreaded 'death after death'" (Schmidt 2000, 96).

56 Appler 2004, 152–173; Ackroyd 1983; Beach 1993.

57 Because of the many lacunae and ambiguities in the secondary Anat texts, this section focuses on those two Ugaritic epics as my primary sources. Likewise, due to the frankly speculative nature of the suggestions that "reinstate" Anat into verses of the Hebrew Bible, they do not figure in this discussion.

58 Literally "she prepared her eyes with eye-makeup, and she improved her head," (v. 30) generally understood as styling her hair (cf. the JPS translation "dressed her hair", CEB "arranged her hair", and NIV "arranged her hair").

59 Unfortunately, both beautification scenes are broken. They seem to include eye makeup, perfume, and purple dye before (1.3.ii.2–3) and the application of murex (perhaps the same purple dye?) afterward (1.3.iii.1); the verb for beautification is *ttpp*, a 3fs prefixing Rt form of the root Y-P-Y (connected to Hebrew הפי).

herself with the bloody heads and hands from her battle (though no feet): "She fastened heads (*rišt*) to her back; she girded hands (*kpt*) at her belt."[60]

Mostly from these two connections, Appler argues for Jezebel's "direct correlation with Anat," saying that "the Deuteronomistic historian implies that Jezebel is (...) the embodiment of the goddess Anat."[61] This statement is problematic on several grounds, from the ascription of the Jezebel story to the Deuteronomistic Historian[62] to the idea that textual details from Ugaritic myths about Anat would be intimately well-known to a biblical audience.[63] Nonetheless, Jezebel certainly does embody the same literary type as Anat: the woman from the North whose beauty and ruthlessness were equally strong.

Moreover, the incident with Naboth provides even stronger parallels than Jezebel's death – specifically with Anat's actions in the epic of Aqhat. In this Ugaritic tale, the boy Aqhat displays his new, divinely-gifted bow at a feast hosted by his parents. Anat covets the bow and bargains for it with Aqhat, but the boy refuses, scornfully mocking the idea that a woman would use a bow at all. In her rage at his refusal, Anat plots to kill Aqhat, enlisting her male lieutenant Yatapan. Although the scenes that follow are broken, she seems to set up another feast for Aqhat, during which Yatapan strikes him dead. Unfortunately, although the god Ilu grudgingly approved her plan, killing Aqhat has cosmic consequences; it seems to cause a drought that afflicts the whole land.

The stages of action here are remarkably parallel to Jezebel's actions against Naboth. A man was approached for a prized possession connected to acquiring food, whether by hunting or by gardening. After he refused to give it up, a powerful woman plotted his death. She did so by commissioning a male intermediary to attack him at a public gathering. Once he was dead, she attempted to take possession. But a divine message – Elijah's prophecy or the national drought – indicated that her actions were "infelicitous."[64]

60 *'tkt . rišt . lbmth . šnst kpt . b bšh* (KTU 1.3 ii.11–13).

61 Appler 2004, 188.

62 As noted above, multiple authors (especially Rófe 1998 and Cronauer 2005) have suggested that the primary Jezebel stories come from a late, post-Exilic redaction that portrays her as the dreaded "foreign wife" of Ezra/Nehemiah.

63 Anat was probably known at some level to the biblical audience, but knowing of a Canaanite goddess and recognizing specific textual allusions to the thousand-years-prior Baal Cycle are two very different levels of cultural exchange.

64 Cf. Wright 1999, 112–118. Wright borrows the terms of felicity/infelicity from Grimes 1990 who borrows them from Austin 1962. Where Austin uses the terms specifically to describe performative utterances, Grimes and Wright use them for rituals more broadly. A felicitous performance is one that goes off happily or successfully, having avoided various infelicities (e.g. incomplete execution or insincere intention). Because Jezebel and Anat's acts are neither performative utterances nor rituals, in the traditional sense, my use of the term represents an expansion – but an appropriate one, in my view. Each of the women engages in a sequence of behavior that has cosmic negative consequences, and the reason for those consequences can be explained as a combination of two infelicities: "misapplication" (the fact that they are women) and "violation" (the fact that their behavior causes harm).

Summary	*Aqhat (KTU 1.17–19)*	*1 Kings 21*
A man possesses something that is divinely gifted and associated with food production	Aqhat and his bow gifted by Kothar-wa-Ḫasis (1.17.v.26–28)	Naboth and his ancestral vineyard
The man is approached with an offer, but he rebuffs it indignantly	Anat offers to pay Aqhat, then offers immortality. He refuses. (1.17.vi.16–40)	Ahab offers money or a replacement vineyard to Naboth. He refuses (vv. 2–3)
With a petulant response, eating/ drinking ceases	Anat casts her goblet on the ground when she sees the bow. (1.17.vi.15)	Ahab refuses to eat when Naboth refuses him (v. 4)
A powerful woman verbally plots his death in order to obtain the possession	Anat declares to Ilu that she will smite Aqhat (1.17.vi.52-?)	Jezebel tells Ahab that she will get him the vineyard (v. 7)
She commissions men to kill him at a ritual gathering	Anat tells Yatapan to kill Aqhat (1.18.iv.17–27)	Jezebel tells the city nobles to kill Naboth (vv. 8–10)
The man is killed successfully at the assembly	Aqhat dies at a feast (1.18.iv.29–37)	Naboth dies at a public fast (vv. 12–13)
A divine sign reflects and reveals the unjust death	Regional drought follows Aqhat's death (1.19.i.29–34)	Elijah brings a prophetic message of punishment to Ahab (vv. 17–24)
Revenge is delayed for years, but ultimately follows	After years of mourning, Pughat goes in disguise to kill Yatapan (1.19.iv.28–47)	Years later, Ahab, Jezebel, and their children are all slaughtered (1 Kgs 22: 34–38; 2 Kgs 1:17, 9:24–26, 30–37, 10:7–11)

Now, there *is* some evidence that biblical authors may have been familiar with the Aqhat narrative in some form; the prophet Ezekiel thrice mentions Danel, Aqhat's father, as a paradigm of righteousness and wisdom.[65] But without stronger intertextual data, it is impossible to demonstrate that the story of Naboth is deliberately modeled on the story of Aqhat. Rather, both of them envision dangerous femininity in a similar way. The Dangerous Woman is not satisfied with domestic life; she reaches out and covets that which is not hers. The Dangerous Woman inverts the natural metaphor where men hunt for women; instead, she hunts men,[66] though she may do so through intermediaries who can carry out her hunger for power. Because of her actions, natural events are inverted; the communal gathering, whether feast or fast, becomes a site of danger and death. And in the end, though her violence may succeed, the cosmos reacts against her unnatural behavior.

This theme is supported by an additional parallel between Aqhat and Jezebel's death. Just as Jezebel is first murdered, then devoured by animals, so is Aqhat. When Aqhat's father Danel searches for Aqhat's body, he invokes Baal, who systematically breaks the pinions of vultures so that Danel can cut them open them to look for human remains. Each time, he sews up the vultures, and they miraculously recover and fly away. Finally, Aqhat's body is found inside the female vulture Ṣamal.[67] As "the mother of all vultures", she is identified by Wright as "almost a reflection of" Anat[68] and is notable for her gender. But unlike Anat, Ṣamal is mortal and thus vulnerable. After Danel discovers Aqhat's remains inside her, having slit open her gullet, he takes the remains and leaves her lying dead and disemboweled. The female predator has been appropriately punished.

The Maiden and the Queen

We thus come to the central conundrum of this paper. Over and over, the ancient Near Eastern literature depicts a consistent scheme. Women are metaphorically treated and depicted as food; those women who invert the metaphor, hunting for their own prey, are dangerous and must be "put back in their place", becoming prey themselves. Yet despite the consistency of this conceptual metaphor, Anat seems to contravene it. She is a huntress and a warrior; she preys upon Aqhat and wades knee-deep in the blood of her foes. And as

65 Ezek 14:14, 20 and 28:3. For discussion of these passages and whether they refer to the Ugaritic/Canaanite Danel, cf. the major commentaries on Ezekiel, as well as (most prominently) Day 1980 and Dressler 1979.

66 Compare the modern slang term describing a woman as a "man-eater", someone for whom "the beauty is there but a beast is in the heart" (lyrics from "Maneater" by Hall and Oates). The quoted song is quite biblical, using the image of a predatory seductress as an extended metaphor for a corrupt, decadent city (Kauffman 2014).

67 Ṣamal's name is enigmatic (cf. Wright 1999, 177), but it may connect to the Akkadian *ẓamaltu/ṣamaltu* – a food utensil of some kind – or *samālu*, a cup.

68 Wright 1999, 219. Note also Anat's general connection to vultures (Appler 2004, 153).

far as we see in any of the extant Ugaritic sources, she never receives her "just desserts" for this behavior.

The answer comes when we turn to examine Anat's gender. An initially promising possibility identifies Anat as an androgynous figure, based on her "masculine" prowess at hunting and warfare. Some scholars have even argued for an actual masculine appearance, claiming a beard for Anat based on one still-debated line of the Baal Epic.[69] But this dubious line aside, there is little evidence for Anat as androgynous in body. When we turn to iconographic evidence, despite the difficulties with identification, the data agree; Cornelius found only six images of Anat identified by inscription, and all of them are unequivocally female.[70] In short, while Anat's actions may have been traditionally masculine[71] she is never clearly identified as male or even androgynous.[72] So as a woman, how can she successfully consume without being consumed?

The answer lies in the metaphor of woman is food – and specifically the site of its origin as a cross-cultural metaphor. Kövecses summarizes the process as follows: "This conceptualization of women and men chiefly occurs when they both are considered for sexual purposes. The relationship of sexuality that exists between women and men is perhaps the main and most productive perspective from which men think and talk about women.[73] (...) The SEX IS EATING and THE OBJECT OF SEX IS FOOD metaphors combine with the metaphor of SEXUAL DESIRE/LUST IS HUNGER, where the ob-

69 Cf. the lengthy discussion and authors cited in Loewenstamm 1984, which concludes against a bearded Anat.

70 Cf. Cornelius 2008, 89. Unfortunately, no Ugaritic images of her survive with an identifying inscription, but those Ugaritic images often identified with her – usually because of the presence of wings – are also not androgynous.

71 In addition to her hunting and warfare, both traditionally the domain of men – though cf. Tamber-Rosenau's argument below – there are other hints that Anat's behavior was masculine. "It seems that 'Anatu, in lacerating herself (in the Ba'lu Myth, KTU 1.6:1.2–5), overstepped gender boundaries. The goddess more often revealed this behaviour. In the Ba'lu Myth she furthermore buried the corpse of her husband Ba'lu, which was generally considered to be a male task (KTU 1.6:1.8–18)" (Marsman 2003, 522).

72 I have not yet addressed the much-debated description of Anat that appears after she approaches Ilu, in a formulaic exchange present in both Aqhat and the Baal Epic. After Anat makes her demands, Ilu responds, "I know you, daughter, that you are *anšt*". This final word "can be related to two roots, *ʾnš*, one meaning 'human, man, person,' and the other, 'weak, ill'" (Smith and Pitard 2008, 352); the latter root could be extended to mean "sick with anger or emotion", and was used to describe Baal in that sense. Some (e.g. Wright 1999, 125–126; Dijkstra and de Moor 1975, 193) have argued that Ilu is calling Anat "manly," i.e. "unfeminine", here. But I find the philological evidence unpersuasive. *ʾnš* means human, not male; if this first root was intended, I would read it as "you are acting like a human, i.e. not a divine being." Moreover, since the latter root is used in the same text to describe Baal, it is the more likely choice. The description refers to Anat's temperament, not her gender – a conclusion supported by Walls 1992, 83–86, among others.

73 There is an interesting parallel here in Abusch's (2007) observation that the witch primarily was responsible for digestive and sexual ailments made above: in other words, the domains most connected to this female figure were sex and food.

ject of hunger is again APPETIZING FOOD (Lakoff 1987). These metaphors led to the conceptualization of women as appetizing food."

In other words, sex and eating are both bodily processes of appetite satiation with semantic domains that naturally overlap in metaphor.[74] From the perspective of a heterosexual male, the object of eating, i.e. the equivalent of food, is women. But this metaphor does not apply to everyone.[75] Most relevantly, not all women are sexually accessible. In my survey of literature on the woman is food metaphor, a universal constant was that the object of the metaphor was a sexually desirable woman – i.e. not someone whose age, appearance, or identity would "turn off one's appetite."[76] Put differently, in Adams's language, objectification is a necessary stage of consumption; to metaphorically eat a woman, one must first dehumanize her into a sexual object.

What of Anat, then? One line in Kirta compares a woman's beauty to Anat and Astarte, so she was considered beautiful.[77] But as far as sexual availability goes, scholarly opinion has changed dramatically in recent decades. While Anat was once seen as a "fertility goddess" who openly had sex with Baal, Aqhat, and perhaps others, the evidence for that behavior was based on lacunae that simply do not stand up to rigorous scrutiny.[78] In many cases, the outdated tendency to connect any female goddess with "fertility" is a visible bias. Anat's epithet of *batulatu* supports this non-sexualized conclusion. While the Semitic term may not have meant 'virgin' in an absolute sense, as numerous linguistic studies have demonstrated,[79] it generally represented a "a transitional, preparatory stage", to quote Martha Roth[80] – a young woman who was old enough to marry, yet not married. But one of the most important aspects of *batulatu*, which has not previously been discussed to my knowledge, is what she was *not*: a fetishized object of desire.[81] Among the many epithets in Song of Songs, the lover never calls his beloved a בְּתוּלָה. Nor do any of the Akkadian appearances of *batultu* occur in erotic contexts. As for Ugaritic texts, it appears only as an epithet of Anat.

74 This metaphor can go in either direction, as with the slang term "food porn" to refer to especially appetizing images of food.

75 To begin, not all speakers are heterosexual men; however, since the author of Aqhat likely was one, we do not delve into that oversight here.

76 One exception exists: the use of sweet foods as slang for pre-pubescent girls (a cupcake, a little cookie). However, the metaphor here is of sweetness and small size rather than sexual desirability; little girls are not "pieces of meat."

77 KTU 1.14 III 41–42.

78 Cf. Day 1992, in particular for summarizing this shift, but also Walls 1992, 122–152, for a discussion of some of the prominent texts.

79 Some discussion: Wenham 1972; Walls 1992, 78–79; Day 1995, 283; Bergman, Ringgren, and Tzevat 1975, 338–43.

80 Roth 1987, 746.

81 Here I diverge strongly from Walls, who argues that "As a divine, nubile adolescent, Anat is erotic whether she intends to be or not. Indeed, her virginity actually accentuates her sexual availability" (Walls 1992, 201). Whatever Walls' opinions on the allure of virgin adolescents, I can find no evidence that ancient Near Eastern tastes eroticized them.

One important hint of the term's connotations is in the biblical text of 2 Samuel 13, Amnon's rape of Tamar.

> "David's son Absalom had a beautiful sister named Tamar,
> and David's son Amnon loved her.
> But Amnon was sick with misery over Tamar his sister,
> because she was a בְּתוּלָה,
> and it seemed impossible to Amnon to do anything to her" (2Sam 13:1–2).

These final two statements seem linked: Tamar is a בְּתוּלָה, and thus it seems impossible – or miraculous (פלא) – to do anything to her. Indeed, her status as בְּתוּלָה is presented as a roadblock to Amnon: she is beautiful, but she is a בְּתוּלָה. This implies that a key part of the בְּתוּלָה status was inaccessibility for sexual contact. Perhaps, rather than defining a *batulatu* as a young woman who has not had sex, we should define her as a young woman *with whom no one ought to have sex*, until her status was changed to something else.[82]

Notably, this categorization does not mark Anat as a "liminal" figure. Walls argues that Anat had a liminal gender status,[83] and his argument has been supported more recently by Day.[84] In their view, Anat is female, yet not quite a woman, due to her lack of sexualization.[85] As someone outside the category of women, she can transgress normal gender boundaries. Yet Tamber-Rosenau is right to criticize the application of the term "liminal" here (and in other instances of ancient warrior-women), on several grounds. First, she notes, "the term assumes that there *is* a clear gender boundary or threshold for the characters to straddle."[86] Second, and even more persuasively, she observes: "[I]t is suspicious that the figures most often dubbed "liminal" in this context are female. If goddesses and mortal female characters in literature are repeatedly labelled as liminal on the basis of purported gender transgression, perhaps modern scholars are holding to an overly

82 This definition is supported by the word's use in Esther. After banishing Queen Vashti, the king puts out a call for "beautiful young *betulot*" (תובוט תולותְּב תורָעְנ) to be brought to the palace and placed in his harem (Esther 2:2,3). But they are only תולותְּב before they are ready for sexual contact. (2:4: "Let the girl (הָרֲעַנ) who pleases the king become queen"; 2:12, "each girl would go in to the king"; etc.). The term's reappearance in 2:16 ("she obtained favor and grace, more than all the תולותְּב") is ambiguous.

83 "She is a liminal figure, both socially and sexually, in that she is outside of the normative feminine categories of mother, wife, or dependent daughter" (Walls 1992, 158).

84 "As perpetual *btlt* she is suspended in the liminality of adolescence, where male and female social roles have not yet been fully differentiated. This lack of complete gender separation is expressed mythologically by a "confusion of categories", the absence of a boundary between male and female spheres of activity" (Day 1992, 183).

85 To be clear, Anat was not a real woman; therefore, psychoanalytic explanations like that of Walls (1999) are unsatisfying. To quote Murphy, "these texts were written by males who were probably far less concerned with representing 'feminine rage' or critiquing 'repressive androcentric social and gender ideology'" (Murphy 2009, 538).

86 Tamber-Rosenau 2018, 24.

restrictive definition of what constitutes womanhood. One also wonders whether there is not some modern bias regarding unmarried or childless women at work here."

On the one hand, the "bias regarding unmarried or childless women" is hardly modern; as Moss and Baden observe, there is "a master narrative running throughout the Bible in which fertility is a sign of divine blessing, procreation an obligation, and infertility a sign of divine judgment and moral failure", all especially true for women.[87] At the same time, Moss and Baden's broader goal is to show that this "master narrative" is far from uniform or universal. After all, the Bible "recognizes that there are, within the class of women, individuals who do not have children. This is clear enough from the mere presence in the text of such women, and prominent ones: Dinah, Miriam, Deborah."[88] Tamber-Rosenau's point is thus an insightful one: if Miriam and Deborah can be childless and yet not marked by the text as other than wholly women, why should we impose the category of liminality upon them?

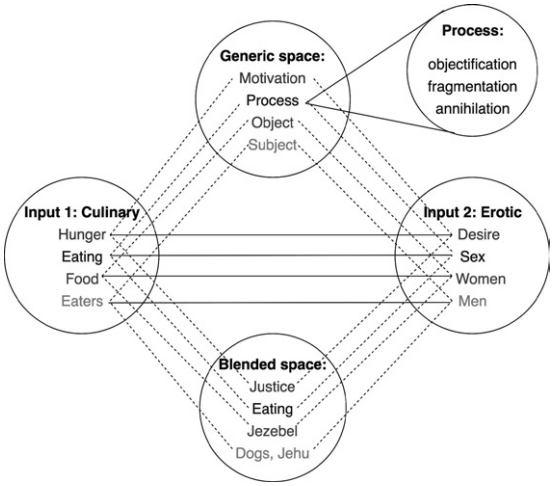
Thus, Anat is not a "liminal woman" – but she is a sexually unavailable one. In contrast, we have the metaphor woman is food, which is predicated on the woman being an object of sexual attraction. No wonder, then, that the metaphor was not seen as applying to her. As someone outside this metaphor's semantic range, and therefore impossible to reduce metaphorically to food, she could follow a different set of norms – the norms of the wild huntress – without needing to be rewarded with a "just punishment."

Some Conclusions

We can thus return to Aqhat's question: "do women go hunting?". Can women be devourers instead of being food? The answer for sexualized women is "no, they ought not." Jezebel goes hunting metaphorically, and in turn becomes the hunted. Anat goes hunting, but as a *batulatu,* she is exempt from being contemplated as metaphorical food. This distinction thus illuminates the metaphorical map of woman is food. We have learned that "woman" refers to a woman who is available for sexual advances, not merely any female, and "being food" refers to participating as the object of the three-stage process of objectification, fragmentation, and annihilation.

We have also explored the ways that metaphors can shape narrative in extended, realized form. In particular, we have seen an unconventional literary manifestation of the concept of conceptual blending, as pioneered by Fauconnier and Turner in *The Way We Think.*[89] In conceptual blending, a metaphor does not merely substitute one concept for another; it creates a blended space where some, but not all, features of both concepts coexist. For instance, one might map the story of Jezebel's death as follows:

87 Moss and Baden 2015, 14.
88 *Ibid.,* 90.
89 Cf. their entire book, but particularly pp. 40–50.



Jezebel is both a literal woman and literal food. She is objectified and annihilated in a narrative sense, but she is also actually eaten by dogs. As for the generic space of "motivation", there is neither overt lust nor overt hunger in the text; rather, the motivation is the reader (and Jehu)'s hunger for justice. The blended space of the metaphor in this passage is therefore complex and dynamic, and the fact that it was evoked so skilfully within a broader narrative is a mark of admirable writing ability.

The author of the Jezebel narratives used the metaphor woman is food to make an implicit argument: Jezebel, as an example of the dangerous Foreign Woman, reversed the natural order of things; the appropriate response to such unnatural behavior is the violent reassertion of traditional norms. In doing so, this author drew upon ancient Near Eastern images of independent women that had previously manifested in the Ugaritic depiction of Anat, images that portrayed the extreme danger of a woman who hunted others instead of being consumed. But by transplanting these traits from Anat, who could engage in such behavior because of her non-sexual associations, to Jezebel, who was a sexually active woman, the author was able to link them to the metaphor woman is food – first in negated form, but ultimately in its original form.

To paraphrase Proverbs 6:26, Jezebel was no simple loaf of bread, but a "man's wife who went hunting for precious life." Yet in the end, her fate and the bread loaf's would be the same.

Bibliography

Abusch, T. 2007, "Witchcraft, Impotence, and Indigestion", in: I.J. Finkel – M.J. Geller (eds), *Disease in Babylonia*, Cuneiform Monographs 36, Leiden: Brill, 146–59.

—. 2015, *The Witchcraft Series Maqlû*, Atlanta: SBL Press.

Ackerman, S. 1998, *Warrior, Dancer, Seductress, Queen: Women in Judges and Biblical Israel*, New Haven: Yale University Press.

Ackroyd, P. 1983, "Goddesses, Women, and Jezebel", in: A. Kuhrt and A. Cameron (eds), *Images of Women in Antiquity*, Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 245–259.

Adams, C.J. 1990, *The Sexual Politics of Meat, A Feminist-Vegetarian Critical Theory. Twentieth Anniversary Edition*, New York: Continuum.

Appler, D. 2004, *A Queen Fit for a Feast: Digesting the Jezebel Story (1 Kings 15: 29–2 Kings 9: 37)*, PhD Thesis, Vanderbilt University.

Aschkenasy, N. 1998, *Woman at the Window: Biblical Tales of Oppression and Escape*, Detroit: Wayne State University Press.

Austin, J.L. 1962, *How to Do Things with Words: The William James Lectures Delivered at Harvard University in 1955*, Oxford: Clarendon.

Beach, E.F. 1993, "The Samaria Ivories, Marzeaḥ, and Biblical Text", *The Biblical Archaeologist* 56/2, 94- 104.

Bembry, J. 2018, "The Levite's Concubine (Judg 19:2) and the Tradition of Sexual Slander in the Hebrew Bible: How the Nature of Her Departure Illustrates a Tradition's Tendency", *Vetus Testamentum*, 68/4, 519–539.

Bergman, J. – Ringgren, H. – Tzevat, M. 1975, "Betûlâ, Betûlîm", *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament* 2, Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans.

Bird, P. 1989, "'To Play the Harlot' An Inquiry into an Old Testament Metaphor", in: P.I. Day (ed), *Gender and Difference in Ancient Israel*, Minneapolis: Fortress, 186–199.

Brenner, A. 1999, "The Food of Love: Gendered Food and Food Imagery in the Song of Songs", *Semeia* 86, 101–112.

Brueggemann, W. 2000, *1 and 2 Kings*, Smyth and Helwys Bible Commentary, Macon: Smyth and Helwys.

Campbell, A.F. – O'Brien, M.A 2000, *Unfolding the Deuteronomistic History: Origins, Upgrades, Present Text*, Minneapolis: Fortress Press.

Cho, P.K.K. 2019, *Myth, History, and Metaphor in the Hebrew Bible* (1st ed.), Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. https://www.cambridge.org/core/product/identifier/9781108567992/type/book.

Christensen, D.L. 2009, *Nahum: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (Vol. 24), New Haven: Yale University Press.

Cogan, M. 1974, *I Kings: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, The Anchor Yale Bible, New York: Garden City.

Cogan, M. – Tadmor, H. 1988, *II Kings: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, The Anchor Yale Bible, New York: Garden City.

Cohn, Robert L. 2000, *2 Kings (Berit Olam: Studies in Hebrew Narrative and Poetry)*, Collegeville: Liturgical Press.

Cornelius, I. 2008, *The Many Faces of the Goddess: The Iconography of the Syro-Palestinian Goddesses Anat, Astarte, Qedeshet, and Asherah c. 1500–1000 BCE*, (2nd ed.), Fribourg: Academic Press/Vandenhoeck&Ruprecht, http://www.zora.uzh.ch/138019.

Crespo-Fernández, E. 2015, "Food and Eating", in: E. Crespo-Fernández (ed), *Sex in Language: Euphemistic and Dysphemistic Metaphors in Internet Forums*, London: Bloomsbury Academic, 153–161.

Cronauer, P.T. 2005, *The Stories about Naboth the Jezreelite: A Source, Composition, and Redaction Investigation of 1 Kings 21 and Passages in 2 Kings 9*, New York: Bloomsbury Academic&Professional, http://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/brandeis-ebooks/detail.action?docID=436353.

Day, P.L. 1980, "The Daniel of Ugarit and Ezekiel and the Hero of the Book of Daniel", *Vetus Testamentum* 30/2, 174–184.

—. 1992, "Anat: Ugarit's 'Mistress of Animals'", *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 51/3, 181–190.

—. 1995, "The Personification of Cities as Female in the Hebrew Bible: The Thesis of Aloysius Fitzgerald, FSC", *Reading from This Place* 2, 283–302.

Dijkstra, M. – de Moor, J.C. 1975, "Problematical Passages in the Legend of Aqhâtu", *Ugarit Forschungen* 7, 171–215.

Dressler, H.H.P. 1979, "The Identification of the Ugaritic DNIL with the Daniel of Ezekiel", *Vetus Testamentum* 29/2, 152–161.

Durand, J.-M. 1988, *Archives Épistolaires de Mari* (Vol. 26), Paris: Editions Recherche sur les civilisations.

Erickson, D. 2009, *Ghosts, Metaphor, and History in Toni Morrison's Beloved and Gabriel García Márquez's One Hundred Years of Solitude*, New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Exum, J.Ch. 1993, *Fragmented Women: Feminist (Sub)Versions of Biblical Narratives*, Sheffield: JSOT Press.

Fauconnier, G. – Turner, M. 2002, *The Way We Think: Conceptual Blending and the Mind's Hidden Complexities*, New York: Basic.

Flesch, W. 2007, *Comeuppance: Costly Signaling, Altruistic Punishment, and Other Biological Components of Fiction*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Gansell, A.R. 2014, "The Iconography of Ideal Feminine Beauty Represented in the Hebrew Bible and Iron Age Levantine Ivory Sculpture", in: I. de Hulster – J.M. LeMon (eds), *Image, Text, Exegesis: Iconographic Interpretation and the Hebrew Bible* (Vol. 588), London/New York: Bloomsbury/T&T Clark, 46–70.

George, A.R. 2009, *Babylonian Literary Texts in the Schøyen Collection* (Vol. 10), Bethesda: CDL Press.

Graetz, N. 2017, "Metaphors Connecting Jeremiah and Jezebel: The Case of Domen", *Women in Judaism* 14/1, 32.

Gray, J. 1963, *I & II Kings: A Commentary*, Philadelphia: Westminster Press.

Grimes, R.L. 1990, *Ritual Criticism: Case Studies in Its Practice, Essays on Its Theory*, Columbia: University of South Carolina Press.

Gubar, S. 1987, "Representing Pornography: Feminism, Criticism, and Depictions of Female Violation", *Critical Inquiry* 13/4, 712–741.

Guest, D. 2016, "Modeling the Transgender Gaze: Performances of Masculinites in 2 Kings 9–10", in: T. Hornsby – D. Guest (eds), *Transgender, Intersex and Biblical Interpretation*, Atlanta: SBL Press, 45–80.

Pardee, D. 2003, "Dawn and Dusk (1.87)", in: W.W. Hallo – K.L. Younger (eds), *The Context of Scripture, Vol. I: Canonical Compositions from the Biblical World*. Leiden: Brill, 274–283.

Heimpel, W. 2003, *Letters to the King of Mari: A New Translation, with Historical Introduction, Notes, and Commentary*, Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns.

Hines, C. 1999, "Rebaking the Pie: The WOMAN AS DESSERT Metaphor", in: M. Bucholtz – L.A. Sutton – A.C. Liang (eds), *Reinventing Identities: the Gender Self in Discourse*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 145–162.

Hobbs, T. R. 1985, *2 Kings*, Word Biblical Commentary (Vol. 13), Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

Hunt, P. 2008, "The Lovers' Banquet: 'Feed Me with Sweet Cakes . . . Your Loving Is Better than Wine'", in: P. Hunt (ed), *Poetry in the Song of Songs. A Literary Analysis*, New York: Peter Lang Publishing.

Kauffman, L. 2014, "John Oates on His New Album, Rock and Roll Hall of Fame Induction, and What 'I Can't Go For That' Is Really About", *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, 18 March 2014. https://www.inquirer.com/philly/entertainment/music/John_Oates_on_his_new_album_Rock_and_Roll_Hall_of_Fame_induction_and_what_I_Cant_Go_For_That_is_really_about_.html.

Lakoff, G. – Johnson, M. 1980, *Metaphors We Live By*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Létourneau, A. 2014, "Jézabel: généalogie d'une femme fatale", *Science et Esprit* 66/2, 189–211.

Loewenstamm, S.E. 1982, "Did the Goddess Anat Wear Side-Whiskers and a Beard?", *Ugarit Forschungen* 14, 119–123.

López Rodríguez, I. 2008, "Are Women Really Sweet? An Analysis of the Woman as Dessert Metaphor in the English and Spanish Written Press", *BABEL-AFIAL* 17, 179–195.

Marsman, H.J. 2003, *Women in Ugarit and Israel: Their Social and Religious Position in the Context of the Ancient Near East*. Leiden: Brill.

McKinlay, J. 2002, "Negotiating the Frame for Viewing the Death of Jezebel", *Biblical Interpretation* 10/3, 305–323.

Meredith, Ch. 2018, "'Eating Sex' and the Unlovely Song of Songs: Reading Consumption, Excretion, and D.H. Lawrence", *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* 42/3, 341–362.

Montgomery, J.A. – Gehman, H.S. 1951, *Kings I and II*, International Critical Commentary, (Vol. 10), London: Bloomsbury T&T Clark.

Moss, C.R. – Baden, J.S. 2015, *Reconceiving Infertility: Biblical Perspectives on Procreation and Childlessness*, Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Munro, J.M. 1995, "Nature Imagery", *Spikenard and Saffron: The Imagery of the Song of Songs*, Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press.

Murphy, K.J. 2009, "Myth, Reality, and the Goddess Anat: Anat's Violence and Independence in the Ba'al Cycle", *Ugarit Forschungen* 41, 525–542.

O'Brien, M.A. 1989, *The Deuteronomistic History Hypothesis: A Reassessment*, Göttingen: Universitätsverlag/Vandenhoeck&Ruprecht, http://www.zora.uzh.ch/152171.

Pienaar, D.N. 2008, "Symbolism in the Samaria Ivories and Architecture", *Acta Theologica* 28/2, 48–68.

Pruin, D. 2006, *Geschichten und Geschichte: Isebel als literarische und historische Gestalt*, Göttingen: Academic Press/Vandenhoeck&Ruprecht, http://www.zora.uzh.ch/150320.

—. 2007, "What Is in a Text? - Searching for Jezebel", in: L.L. Grabe (ed), *Ahab Agonistes*, London: T&T Clark, 208–238.

Rofé, A. 1998, "The Vineyard of Naboth: The Origin and Message of the Story", *Vetus Testamentum* 38, 89–104.

Roth, M.T. 1987, "Age at Marriage and the Household: A Study of Neo-Babylonian and Neo-Assyrian Forms", *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 29/4, 715.

Shemesh, Y. 2015, (יעל שמש), "'She Sealed Them with His Seal': A Gendered Reading of the Story of Naboth's Vineyard / סיפור כרם נבות בראייה – (מל"א כא 8) 'ותחתם בחתמו' מגדרית", *Beit Mikra: Journal for the Study of the Bible and Its World* (בית מקרא), 49–117.

Schmidt, B.B. 2000, "Memory as Immortality: Countering the Dreaded 'Death after Death' in Ancient Israelite Society", in: A.J. Avery-Peck – J. Neusner (eds), *Judaism in Late Antiquity 4. Death, Life-After-Death, Resurrection and The World-to-Come in the Judaisms of Antiquity*, Leiden: Brill, 87–100.

Schroer, S. 2014, "Ancient Near Eastern Pictures as Keys to Biblical Metaphors", in: Ch.M. Maier – N. Calduch-Benages (eds), *The Writings and Later Wisdom Books*, (Vol. 1), Atlanta: SBL Press, 129–164.

Scurlock, J. 2011, "Death and the Maidens: A New Interpretive Framework for KTU 1.23", *Ugarit Forschungen* 43, 411–434.

Seow, C.-L. 1999, "The First and Second Books of Kings", *The New Interpreter's Bible,* (Vol. 3), Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1–295.

Smith, M.S. – Pitard, W. 2008, *The Ugaritic Baal Cycle: Volume II. Introduction with Text, Translation and Commentary of KTU/CAT 1.3–1.4*, Leiden: Brill.

Smith, M.S. 1998, "The Heart and Innards in Israelite Emotional Expressions: Notes from Anthropology and Psychobiology", *Journal of Biblical Literature* 117/3, 427–436.

—. 2006, *The Rituals and Myths of the Feast of the Goodly Gods of KTU/CAT 1.23: Royal Constructions of Opposition, Intersection, Integration, and Domination*, Atlanta: SBL Press.

Soby, J.Th. 1965, *René Magritte*, New York: Doubleday.

Stol, M. 2016, *Women in the Ancient Near East*, Berlin: de Gruyter.

Tamber-Rosenau, C. 2018, *Women in Drag: Gender and Performance in the Hebrew Bible and Early Jewish Literature*, Piscataway: Gorgias Press.

Walls, N.H. 1992, *The Goddess Anat in Ugaritic Myth*, Atlanta: Scholars Press.

Weingarten, S. 2010, "Gynaecophagia: Metaphors of Women as Food in the Talmudic Literature", in: R. Hosking (ed), *Food and Language: Proceedings of the Oxford Symposium on Food and Cookery 2009*, Totnes: Prospect Books, 360–370.

Wenham, G. 1972, "Betûlāh 'A Girl of Marriageable Age'", *Vetus Testamentum* 22/3, 326–348.

Wright, D.P. 1999, *Ritual in Narrative: The Dynamics of Feasting, Mourning and Retaliation Rites in the Ugaritic Tale of Aqhat*, Winona Lake: Pennsylvania State University Press, http://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/brandeis-ebooks/detail.action?docID=3155517.

Visualizing 'Death' (Môtu) in the Ugaritic Texts

Joseph Lam (University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill)

Introduction

The question of the metaphorical representation of deities poses a unique challenge for theorists of metaphor in ancient texts.[1] If all metaphors inherently involve a measure of indeterminacy due to the open-ended process of metaphorical interpretation, then divine metaphors – that is, statements describing the nature of the gods – compound this indeterminacy by virtue of the special status of the category of the divine. After all, the concept of a "deity" is not a simple or stable one, but encapsulates different ways of describing forces that are not fully explicable. In the context of a discussion of literary representations of deities as animals, Marjo Korpel once asserted that "[t]otal or partial metamorphosis was seen as a hallmark of divinity in the ancient world."[2] While this statement is not, strictly speaking, inaccurate, it might be better to say that the category of "divinity" encompasses a range of modes of conceptualizing the fundamental powers that are thought to exist in the world. Divine metaphors are not only *sui generis*, but also a "moving target" that presents challenges that go beyond the already-known complexities of analyzing metaphorical language in general.

This challenge can be complicated further by broader issues of genre in which the divine descriptions are found. In particular, when it comes to mythological contexts, we are inherently dealing with language being pushed to its representational limits, and this should prompt us to calibrate our expectations accordingly. As Edward Greenstein has asserted, "[m]yths are analogous to the genre of the fantastic in that they project human fears and anxieties about the unknown and the paradoxical onto a surreal world – in the case of myth, the realm of hidden forces that is embodied in the lives of the gods."[3] Or, as William Doty argues in the context of offering a cross-cultural definition of myth, "mythical

1 For a helpful discussion, which recognizes that such questions ultimately rest on considerations external to the text itself, see Schwartz 2010. I have elsewhere addressed the question in a similar way, albeit only briefly: see Lam 2019, 38. and *id*. 2016, 109–113. Other treatments of the topic, which vary to the extent to which they frame the question in terms of linguistic concerns, include Long 1994, 509–537; Aaron 2001, esp. 23–41; Hamori 2008; Sommer 2009; Porter (ed) 2009; Knafl 2014.

2 Korpel 1990, 523.

3 Greenstein 1997, 52*.

metaphors, symbols, and allegories provide concrete conveyances for (abstract) thought… and [they] allow experimentation and play with images, ideas, and concepts that would otherwise remain too incorporeal to be engaged."[4] All this to say, in mythological contexts, we should have the expectation of language about the gods that transcends the normal.

Consequently, what is needed is a theoretical approach to metaphor that is adequate to account for these observations. I would suggest that any such approach must recognize at least two things. The first is the role of construal in the interpretation of metaphor.[5] Specifically, this involves a philosophical distinction between the metaphorical and the literal as two distinct modes of interpretation. Strictly speaking, no phrase is a metaphor in and of itself; it is rather a mode of interpretation applied by the reader or hearer. Any phrase that can be read as a metaphor always has a possible literal construal that accompanies it. After all, the most stereotypical (*Sam is a beast*) or familiar (*Juliet is the sun*) of metaphors can in theory be construed literally (*Sam is* [literally] *a beast*; *Juliet is* [literally] *the sun*), even if the resultant interpretation would be judged to be false or nonsensical. The point is that, from a linguistic point of view, literal construals of statements such as *Sam is a beast* and *Juliet is the sun* are indeed possible, resulting in grammatically acceptable propositions that can be evaluated on their truth claims (e.g., "No, Juliet is not, literally, the sun"; or "Yes, Sam is actually the name of the new gorilla at the local zoo").[6] While the plausibility of a given (metaphorical or literal) interpretation might seem obvious in the vast majority of contexts, it is precisely in more ambiguous cases, such as with divine metaphors in mythological contexts, that the lines can blurred.[7] A proper recognition of metaphorical construal frees us from the burden of having to decide in a definitive way whether a given ancient literary statement is metaphorical or not. If we recognize that all metaphorical statements, but especially those dealing with deities, are inherently indeterminate, then the analytical task becomes that of elucidating the possible construals, literal or metaphorical, of the given statement, rather than necessarily determining whether a phrase is metaphorical or not.

Second, we also need a proper account of the relationship between metaphor and pictorial representation – what linguists and philosophers refer to as metaphor as "seeing-as."[8] This relationship is not a straightforward one, and a number of theorists have pointed out the problems with an overly narrow interpretation of the claim that metaphors are images.[9] However, it remains that there is an intuitive association between metaphors and pictures, and the connection might be related to the effects that images produce. The philosopher Richard Moran has argued that "[p]ictures share with metaphors the capacity to get a point across in a way that is indifferent to grammatical mood

4 Doty 1980, 539.

5 For brief discussions of this idea, with references to the literature, see Lam, 2016, 6–9 and *id*. 2019, 41–42.

6 For a careful consideration of the question of grammatical deviance as it relates to metaphor, see Stern 1983.

7 For examples of "twice-apt" metaphors, which permit both literal and metaphorical construals (depending on the context), see Lam 2019, 42.

8 See Stern 2000, 281–294; Camp 2003.

9 Stern 2000, 289.

or to the distinction between bringing something up and saying something in particular about it."[10] These extra-propositional effects – that is, the effects that metaphors produce beyond the propositional – are inherently difficult to describe, but they are an integral part of what distinguishes metaphor from literal language.

Môtu in the Ugaritic Texts

As a way of exploring how these considerations might affect our reading of ancient Near Eastern texts, let us consider the example of the Ugaritic deity Môtu, whose place within the literature and religion of Ugarit has long been the subject of interest and debate. No one denies the prominent role that Môtu plays in the most important mythological composition of ancient Ugarit, the Baʿlu Cycle, and the passages involving this deity include some of the most vivid metaphorical descriptions in Ugaritic literature. But the appearances of Môtu outside of the Baʿlu Cycle are more sporadic, leading some to question if Môtu had much of a role at all in Ugaritic religion beyond a single literary context. Many scholars would probably accept that Môtu appears in lines 8–11 of KTU 1.23[11] (the text referred to variously as "Dawn and Dusk" or "The Birth of the Goodly Gods"), although the exceptions to this view are notable.[12] Certain other suggested occurrences of the name are less certain because of the ambiguity between whether *mt* denotes the deity or the common noun 'death'.[13] Moreover, for a long time, no definitive occurrence of the divine name *mt* in ritual contexts could be identified, but the more recent discovery of a Mesopotamian cuneiform deity list (RS 94.2188) with the logographic writing ^{d}NAM.ÚŠ.A has changed that situation while also prompting a re-evaluation of the signs *mt* occurring immediately after a break in KTU 1.148 34.[14] Even with these newly identified occurrences, the limited presence of Môtu in ritual contexts does not seem to be commensurate with his role as a major deity in the Baʿlu Cycle, and this might reflect an ambivalence toward a deity that represents death – a explanation that would be bolstered by the lack of examples of Môtu being used as a theophoric element in proper names.[15]

10 Moran 1989, 102.

11 All Ugaritic text references in this paper are from the third edition of KTU: Dietrich, Loretz, and Sanmartín 2013.

12 Specifically, in the debate surrounding the identity of the divine figure called *mt wšr* in line 8 and described in the following lines; for discussion, see Smith 2006; Scurlock 2011. Two notable exceptions to the assumption that *mt* (*w šr*) is the god Môtu are the positions of Wyatt, who takes the figure to be ʾIlu (see Wyatt 1977 and 1992), and that of Pardee, who takes it to refer to a double-deity "Warrior-Prince" (i.e., with the element *mt* representing the word *mutu* 'man, warrior') that "prefigures" ʾIlu later in the text but is not, strictly speaking, to be identified with ʾIlu (see Pardee 1997b, 276–277).

13 These include KTU 1.16 VI 6 (from the Kirta Epic), 1.82 5 (from an incantation against snakebite), and 2.10 13 (in a letter relating to military affairs).

14 See Roche-Hawley 2012, 158; for a discussion of KTU 1.148 34 (written before an awareness of the datum from RS 94.2188), see Pardee 2000, 803.

15 Healey argues that the "few personal names containing the element *mt*... [are] probably the noun *mt* meaning 'man, warrior'" (see Healey 1999, 598). Although it is significantly out of date, a partial

In any case, regardless of the precise extent to which Môtu appears outside of the Baʿlu Cycle, this deity turns out to be particularly suitable as a test case for examining divine metaphorical representation. Since the name of the deity means 'death' and transparently invites an association between the portrayal of the deity and the concept itself,[16] one might expect this to be reflected in metaphorical descriptions in literary contexts. In addition, the fact that we have a relatively large number of mentions of this deity (by Ugaritic standards) in a single literary work[17] allows us to observe the variety of modes of depiction that can occur within a unified context of reading (or hearing). This is crucial for engaging with the notion of metaphor, given the importance of construal to metaphorical interpretation. Thus, the following overview will focus only on descriptions of Môtu within the Baʿlu Cycle, though, as already mentioned, these already include nearly all the relevant occurrences of Môtu in Ugaritic.

Anthropomorphic Portrayals of Môtu

All indications are that the default representation (and, potentially, visualization) of Môtu within the Baʿlu Cycle is as an anthropomorphic being, which would be consistent with the general pattern for the gods at Ugarit and elsewhere in the ancient Near East. Not surprisingly, we find Môtu being portrayed as a royal figure in correspondence with other gods: he possesses a throne (KTU 1.6 VI 23–29), and he both receives (KTU 1.4 VIII 14–17, 24–32) and sends (KTU 1.5 I 9ff.) messengers. Near the end of the myth, he is described as either turning or returning to Baal on the heights of Mount Ṣapunu in order to raise his voice in protest:

KTU 1.6 VI 12–13

yṯb . ʿm . bʿl . ṣrrt / ṣpn	He returns to Baʿlu on the heights of Ṣapunu,
yšuʾ gh . w yṣḥ	He raises his voice and says aloud...

One particularly clear anthropomorphic detail is found in the portion of the story in which 'Anatu begins to confront Môtu. There, 'Anatu is explicitly said to initiate the confrontation by grabbing Môtu's clothing:[18]

overview of theophoric elements in proper names at Ugarit can be found in Gröndahl 1967, 78–85.

16 Indeed, as Roche-Hawley suggests, the writing ^{d}NAM.ÚŠ.A in the deity list RS 94.2188, consisting of a divine determinative placed before the logographic writing of the common noun for 'death', reflects at least an *ad hoc* attempt to derive the name of the deity from the concept (loc. cit.).

17 Although questions remain regarding the literary relationship between the six tablets of the Baʿlu Cycle that we possess, the vast majority of Ugaritic scholars agree that at least KTU 1.3–1.6 (which include all the mentions of Môtu) form a connected unity. For a review of scholarship on the question, see Pardee 2009; Smith and Pitard, 2009, 9–10; Smith 1994, 2–20.

18 On this idiom, see Greenstein 1982, 217–218. Greenstein explains it as an idiom having to do with supplication, but that does not diminish the point regarding anthropomorphic representation.

KTU 1.6 II 9–11

tiḫd . mt / b sin . lpš	She ['Anatu] seizes Môtu by the hem of his clothing,
tššqn[h] / b qṣ . all	she grasps [him] by the edge of his garment.

Elsewhere, Môtu is also described as having two hands with which he can eat:

KTU 1.5 I 19–20

p imt . bkl<a>t / ydy . ilḥm	And, indeed, with both my hands I eat...

However, it needs to be qualified that an anthropomorphic representation – in the *form* of a human – does not necessarily imply identity with humans in every respect. In particular, the matter of size is potentially a major point of difference when it comes to divine representation. Mark Smith, among others, has treated the question of the superhuman size of deities with respect to both Ugaritic and Hebrew sources.[19] A number of texts in the Hebrew Bible reflect the notion that the Israelite deity Yahweh was thought to be superhuman in size, such as the instructions for the cherubim throne in Solomon's temple in 1 Kings 6:23–26, or the corresponding vision of the temple throne in Isaiah 6, or the description of Yahweh's interactions with Moses in Exodus 33 and 34.[20] These examples are part of a broader stream of Syro-Palestinian tradition regarding the gigantic size of deities, known not only from texts but also from iconographic evidence such as the footprints of the deity on the thresholds of the Ain Dara temple in northern Syria (see Figures 1 and 2),[21] as well as the single most famous stele from Ugarit, the "Baʿlu with Thunderbolt" (RS 4.427 = AO 15775), which shows the human king as a miniature being next to the god.[22] In keeping with this conceptual pattern, the Baʿlu Cycle also portrays at least certain deities as occupying superhuman space. Examples include the size of Baʿlu's palace, which is said to cover "a thousand fields, ten thousand *kumanu*" (KTU 1.4 V 118–119), and the memorable episode involving the lesser god ʿAṯtaru being too small to fit the throne of Baʿlu:

KTU 1.6 I 56–65

apnk . ʿṯtr . ʿrẓ /	Then terrible ʿAṯtaru
yʿl . b ṣrrt . ṣpn /	goes up to the heights of Ṣapunu.
yṯb . l kḥṯ . aliyn / bʿl .	He sits on the throne of Mightiest Baʿlu,

19 Smith 1988.

20 These examples are cited in Smith 1988, 425.

21 For details, see ʿAli Abū ʿAssāf 1990.

22 For a discussion of this detail, as part of a broader examination of the iconography of the stele, see Bordreuil 1991.

Fig. 1: The Thresholds of the Ain Dara Temple (photo taken in 2010 by author)

pʿnh . l tmġyn / hdm [.]	his feet do not reach the footstool,
rišh . l ymġy / apsh	his head does not reach the top.

Against this background, Môtu definitely falls into the category of gods of superhuman size. For instance, messengers from Baʿlu are warned not to get too close to Môtu, they are enjoined to speak to him "(from) a thousand yards off, ten thousand *kumanu*", the same phrasing used for the size of Baʿlu's palace:

KTU 1.4 VIII 14–17; 24–29

w nġr / ʿnn . ilm	But beware, O couriers of the gods:
al / tqrb . l bn . ilm / mt	Don't go near the son of Ilu, Môtu...
b a/lp . šd	(From) a thousand yards off,
rbt . k/mn .	ten thousand furlongs,
l pʿn . mt / hbr w ql	at the feet of Môtu bow down and fall,
tštḥwy . w k/bd . hwt	fall prostrate and honor him.

Fig. 2: A Footprint of the Deity at the Ain Dara Temple (photo taken in 2010 by author)

Even more clearly, the final battle between Môtu and Baʿlu, in its description of the two deities as equal counterparts, strongly suggests that they are being imagined as roughly the same size:

KTU 1.6 VI 16–17

yt‘n . k gmrm /	They eye each other like warriors(?),
mt . ‘z . b‘l . ‘z .	Môtu is strong, Baʿlu is strong.
yngḫn / k rumm	They gore each other like wild bovids,
mt . ‘z . b‘l / ‘z .	Môtu is strong, Baʿlu is strong.
ynṯkn . k bṯnm /	They bite each other like snakes,
mt . ‘z . b’l . ‘z .	Môtu is strong, Baʿlu is strong.
ymṣḫn / k lsmm .	They trample each other like runners(?),
mt . ql / b‘l . ql .	Môtu falls, Baʿlu falls.

By implication, it would seem that Môtu was also understood as being of superhuman size, like Baʿlu. This would be in keeping with Môtu’s status as one of the primary divine figures within the world of the Baʿlu Cycle.

From the perspective of metaphorical analysis, anthropomorphic representations of deities are a clear illustration of the aforementioned problem of discerning between literal and metaphorical construals of divine language.[23] On the one hand, the anthropomorphic form typically invites a kind of literal construal because of the wide variety of contexts – both textual and iconographic – that presume this same mode of reference for a particular deity. Since this is often the default representation of the deity in literary contexts, which are also the most detailed descriptions of the gods and their activities, it is tempting to see anthropomorphism as the dominant (and, therefore, literal) form of the deity. The unique footprints at the Ain Dara temple, which represent a rare physical, architectural representation of the presence of a deity in a specific location, could be interpreted as supporting such a literal construal. On the other hand, that is not the only way to read the evidence, and it is equally possible to maintain a metaphorical understanding of any or all of the language in question. The determining factor is not anything in the texts themselves, but rather the conceptualization of the deity that we would attribute to the ancient writer or reader. The following observation by Howard Schwartz was made regarding divine conceptualization in the Hebrew Bible, but is in my view applicable more generally: "[t]he point is that we cannot decide whether [language about God/the gods] is literal or metaphorical without resolving and taking a position on… larger theoretical issues that define the interpretive position… Texts can often be read either way."[24] To this I would add that the idea of differences in possible interpretive positions applies equally to the ancients as it does to modern interpreters.

Theriomorphic Portrayals of Môtu

This passage depicting the final battle between Baʿlu and Môtu (KTU 1.6 VI 16–17) also raises a different question pertaining to divine metaphor – that of the use of animal (theriomorphic) metaphors alongside the anthropomorphic representations.[25] Looking more closely at the four descriptions in the sequence of that passage, only the middle two are unambiguously to be identified as animal types (wild bovids, snakes). From the perspective of metaphorical analysis, the application of a sequence of four different descriptions (whether animal or not) to each of Baʿlu and Môtu suggests that no one of them is to be literally identified with either deity. Instead, they function as a series of images to highlight different dimensions of the battle prowess of the two deities.

But beyond the propositional component of what is said, there are also extra-propositional dimensions of the language that need to be considered: for instance, the close succession of images could lead to the visualization of these two mighty deities as shape-shifters, cycling through the various forms in the course of their battle. To be clear, the language

23 See note 1 for a sampling of the literature on this question.

24 Schwartz 2010, 209.

25 For a broad treatment of the question within Biblical Hebrew and Ugaritic literature, see Korpel 1990, 523–613.

does not require such an interpretation, but it seems reasonable to claim that the language makes such effects available, or invites a kind of imaginative construal along such lines.

Another possible theriomorphic metaphor is found in the portrayal of Môtu as a predator taking a lamb or goat in its mouth:

KTU 1.6 II 15–19, 21–23

an . itlk . w aṣd .	I was going about hunting,
kl / ġr . l kbd . arṣ .	In every mountain to the heart of the earth,
kl . gbʿ / l kbd . šdm .	In every hill in the heart of the fields.
npš . ḫsrt / bn . nšm .	My throat was lacking in humans,
npš . hmlt . arṣ	My throat [was lacking] the hordes of the earth.
...	...
ngš . ank . aliyn bʿl /	Then I approached Mightiest Baʿlu;
ʿdbnn ank . imr . b py /	I took him like a lamb in my mouth,
k lli . b ṯbrn q<n>y . <n>ḫtu hw	Like a kid he was crushed in the chasm of my throat.

Though the animal here is not explicitly identified, the nature of the description at least suggests an animal high enough in the food chain to capture a lamb or kid goat in a single bite. Indeed, that poetic bicolon appears elsewhere in the Baʿlu Cycle as a stereotypical way of characterizing Môtu (KTU 1.4 VIII 17–20): in other words, it is not a unique to a depiction of Môtu consuming Baʿlu, but is a more general description of Môtu's tendencies. Note that the verb for 'hunting' (*ṣd*) in KTU 1.6 II 15 can plausibly be applied to a predatory animal, particularly the lion, since the Biblical Hebrew cognate (צוד) is used precisely in this way in Job 38:39.

In turn, a possible connection between Môtu and the lion is bolstered by the related passage in tablet 5 of the myth (KTU 1.5 I 14–17) which uses similar language to describe Môtu's appetite. There, the lion is mentioned explicitly, but is followed by a sequence of other animals as descriptions:

KTU 1.5 I 14–19[26]

p np{.}š . npš . lbim / thw .	My throat is the throat of the lion in the wasteland,
hm . brlt . anḫr / b ym .	And the gullet of the dolphin in the sea.
hm . brky . tkšd / rumm .	It craves the pool like wild bovids,
ʿn . k ḏd . aylt /	Craves springs like herds of deer,
hm . imt . imt . npš . blt / ḥmr .	And, indeed, my appetite consumes in heap(s)!

26 This passage is very closely duplicated in another text, KTU 1.133.

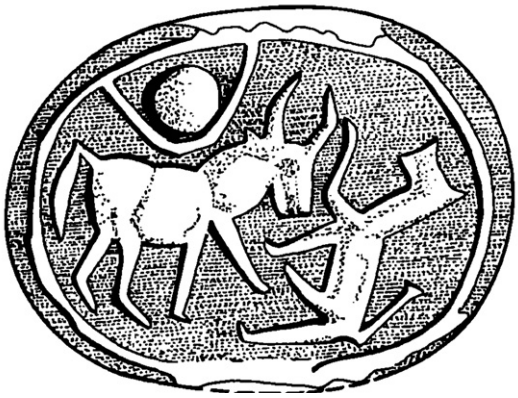


Fig. 3: Scarab Seal from Tell Keisan (from Keel 1990, 190 [n. 9], by courtesy of Peeters Publishers and Booksellers)

At first glance, as with the passage describing Ba'lu and Môtu's confrontation, the use of multiple animals as metaphorical representations for the appetite of Môtu would seem to preclude his being narrowly identified with any one of them. Nonetheless, scholars have used this passage in support of a more direct connection with the first animal listed, the lion. The reason here comes from iconography. In particular, in the iconography of certain seals from the Levant, such as a scarab seal from Tell Keisan (see Figure 3) and another seal impression of a certain Ini-Teshub of Carchemish impressed on a tablet discovered at Ras Shamra, we find the motif of either a bovine or a god on a bovine defeating a lion.[27] As Keel observes, the more common iconographic pattern is that of the victory of the feline over the bovine, but these isolated examples of the opposite pattern, which all come from the northern Levant, could be interpreted as reflecting the confrontations between Ba'lu and Môtu in the Ba'lu Cycle.[28] The other of the two conventional adversaries of Ba'lu, namely Yammu, would be identified with yet other iconographic depictions that show the storm god attacking or defeating a serpent.[29]

Recognizing the highly tentative nature of this suggestion, if we take it to be valid, how are we to understand this in light of the sequence of animals in the passage above? It is not impossible to imagine that Môtu could have had both a conventional animal representation as a lion and for his appetite to be further elaborated in a literary context via a list of other animal descriptions. In that case, it would make sense for the conventional representation to stand first in the series. The poet begins with the conventional identification, but develops it further from there. The passage in KTU 1.5 I 14–19, then,

27 See Keel 1990, 190 (n. 9) and 193 (Fig. 25), the latter of which was originally published and discussed in Schaeffer 1956, 23–26. Keel offers several other examples in his discussion that are useful for purposes of comparison.

28 Keel 1990, 192, 194.

29 For a concise discussion of this point, along with references to additional literature, see Pitard 1998, 279–280.

does not rule out a more stable, conventional association between Môtu and the lion, yet is also not limited by it.

Surreal Representations of Môtu

Finally, let us consider a pair of descriptions that go beyond mere anthropomorphic or theriomorphic representation. These are reminiscent of what Greenstein calls the "surreal" in mythological language. The first is again a description of Môtu's appetite, perhaps also evoking his leonine nature, but in a way that takes on a more cosmic character:

KTU 1.5 II 2–6

[...špt . l a]rṣ .	[...a lip to the e]arth,
špt . l šmm /	a lip to the heavens,
[yšt .]lšn . l kbkbm	[he puts (his) t]ongue to the stars.
y'rb / b'l . b kbkbh	[Ba]'lu will enter his insides,
b ph . yrd[[. k]] / k ḫrr . zt .	Into his mouth he will descend like a dried olive,
ybl . arṣ . w pr / 'ṣm	The produce of the earth, and fruit of the trees.

As is well known, there is a very similar description of the double deity Šaḥru-and-Šalimu in KTU 1.23 61–64 (but without the mention of the tongue reaching to the stars). In the context of the Ba'lu Cycle, we might first of all say that this represents a case of the gigantic size of the gods taken to its logical extreme, but that by itself does not fully capture the significance of the image.

Although it is not a direct comparison, there are certain examples of Egyptian artistic representation of deities that are helpful as a general analogy for the images in question. Particularly germane for our purposes is the representation of the sky-goddess Nut, "whose body symbolized the vault of the sky."[30] In one particular example of this, Nut's body is extended across the sky with her feet touching the ground on one side of the depiction and the hands touching the ground on the other side, with the body supported underneath by Shu, the god of the air (see Figure 4). Incidentally, Nut also had multiple representations, from an anthropomorphic form to a portrayal as a cow.[31] The point is not to draw a direct correlation with the Ugaritic description but to demonstrate the malleable nature of divine representation in the ancient Near East. In fact, these examples, in going beyond the expected ways of representing bodies, stretch the very boundaries of our notions of the literal and the metaphorical. Unlike conventional metaphor, which uses a relatively known concept as a way of apprehending a less familiar one, a metaphorical image (the "source domain", in cognitive terms) of lips that encompass the earth and

30 Shaw and Nicholson 1995, 207.
31 *Ibid*.

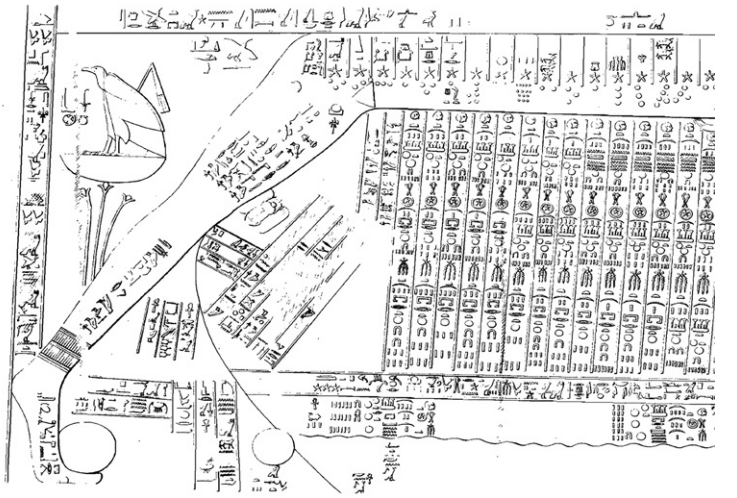


Fig. 4: The Egyptian sky-goddess Nut (from H. Frankfort 1933, pl. LXXXI, by courtesy of The Egypt Exploration Society)

heavens is itself an under-conceptualized, surreal image that expands the limits of our imagination. So the effect is quite different than that of other metaphors, certainly the ones that were discussed in the earlier sections of this essay.

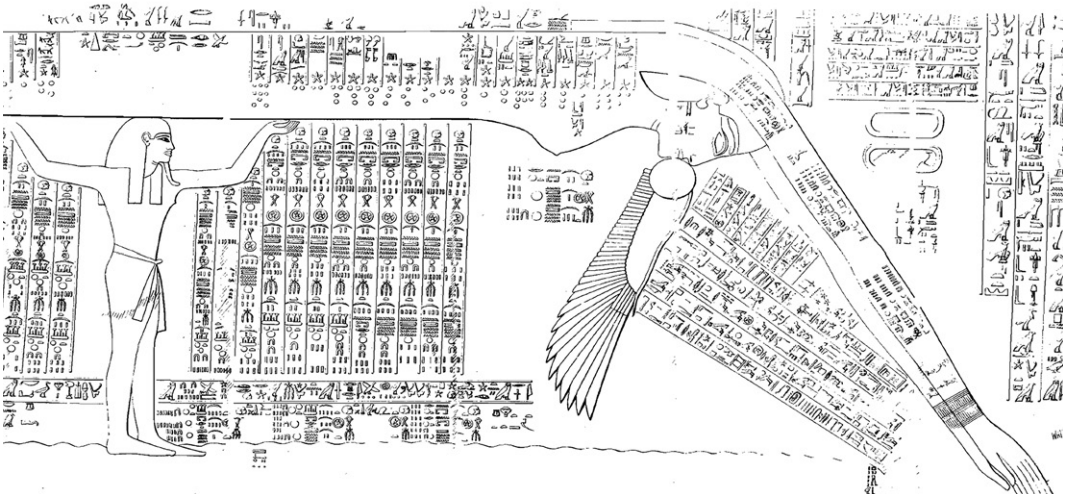
The last example is the description of Môtu being punished by ʻAnatu, which is picked up again in the cycle by Môtu describing what he went through (KTU 1.6 V 12–19):

KTU 1.6 II 30–37

tiḫd / bn . ilm . mt .	She seizes the son of Ilu, Môtu,
b ḥrb / tbqʻnn .	With a sword she splits him,
b ḫṯr . tdry/nn .	With a winnowing-fork she winnows him,
b išt . tšrpnn /	With fire she burns him,
b rḥm . tṭḥnn .	With millstones she grinds him,
b šd / tdrʻnn .	In a field she sows him.
širh . l tikl / ʻṣrm .	The birds eat his flesh,
mnth . l tkly[[y]] / npr[m]	Fowl devour his members,
šir . l šir . yṣḥ	Flesh cries out for flesh.

The difficulties in this much-debated passage are too many to be fully resolvable here. Past interpreters have been divided on the extent to which they feel that each of the actions is meant to evoke the activities of grain processing.[32] Here, one should also consider Noga Ayali-Darshan's contention that the description owes much to the representation

32 For discussion, see Pardee 1997a, 270 n. 257; Mazzini 1997; Margalit 1980, 158–162.



of Osiris in Egyptian mythology.[33] In the context of the present discussion, I would simply suggest that accepting a metaphorical connection either with grain in general or with Osiris in particular (who, of course, is associated with grain) does not require every single detail to conform to that pattern or to make perfect agricultural sense. After all, metaphor works just as much by indirect suggestion as it does by direct description.[34] As with the previous example, there is an extreme quality to the image to which a mere prosaic paraphrase cannot do justice. The "seeing-as" nature of metaphor also makes possible various visceral effects, the reactions that extreme language produces in the reader when one apprehends it, and here, the violence of the image (as with other images of the goddess 'Anatu in the Ba'lu Cycle) cannot be ignored in terms of the overall impression of the passage.

Concluding Remarks

In light of the foregoing discussion, I would contend the term "metaphor" alone is insufficient to convey the distinctions of language use that characterize the modes of representation of deities of the kind that have been presented. Rather, what we need is a more precise vocabulary for talking about the kinds of linguistic construals, and their effects, that potentially take place when readers encounter these texts. In the figure of Môtu in

33 Ayali-Darshan 2017.

34 For a stimulating discussion of the indirect ways in which metaphor functions, set within a more capacious and flexible approach to metaphor based on the idea of "frames of reference," see Harshav 2007.

the Baʿlu Cycle, we have seen that the role of metaphor can vary across the different modes of depiction of the deity: from anthropomorphic representations, which lend themselves most easily to a literal construal but which also need not be limited to such a mode; to theriomorphic representations, which potentially span both the literal and metaphorical; to yet more vivid and fantastic representations that stretch the boundary between the literal and the metaphorical. It is important to emphasize that these representations do not carry with them a predetermined way in which they are to be read, whether separately or together. It is possible to imagine a divine conception in which the anthropomorphic descriptions are a literal representation of the deity, while the theriomorphic and surreal descriptions are taken to be metaphorical; it is also possible to see all three modes as partial, metaphorical representations of a single conceptual reality that transcends them all; one might even opt for a third model in which the idea of divine metamorphosis is the basis for holding some or all of these images together.[35] What this exercise shows is that we ought to avoid one-dimensional and totalizing approaches either to deities or to metaphor. Given the literary creativity evident in these divine images, it is only by carefully attending to the distinct modes of metaphorical representation present in these texts that we can fully appreciate the richness that they have to offer.

Bibliography

Aaron, D.H. 2001, *Biblical Ambiguities: Metaphor, Semantics, and Divine Imagery*, Leiden: Brill.

Abū ʿAssāf, ʿA. 1990, *Der Tempel von ʿAin Dār*ā, Mainz am Rhein: Philipp von Zabern.

Ayali-Darshan, N. 2017, "The Death of Mot and his Resurrection (*KTU*[3] 1.6 II, V) in the Light of Egyptian Sources", *Ugarit Forschungen* 48, 1–20.

Bordreuil, P. 1991, "Où Baal a-t-il remporté la victoire contre Yam?", *Semitica* 40, 17–27.

Camp, E.M. 2003, *Saying and Seeing-as: The Linguistic Uses and Cognitive Effects of Metaphor*, Ph.D. Thesis, University of California, Berkeley.

Dietrich, M. – Loretz, O. – Sanmartín, J. 2013, *Die keilalphabetischen Texte aus Ugarit, Ras Ibn Hani und anderen Ortent* (Dritte, erweiterte Auflage) Alter Orient und altes Testament 360/I, Münster: Ugarit-Verlag.

Doty, W.G. 1980, "Mythophiles' Dyscrasia: A Comprehensive Definition of Myth", *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 48, 531–562.

Frankfort, H. 1933, *The Cenotaph of Seti I at Abydos*, London: The Egypt Exploration Society.

Greenstein, E.L. 1982, "'To Grasp the Hem' in Ugaritic Literature", *Vetus Testamentum* 32, 217–218.

35 See Korpel 1990, 523.

—. 1997, "The God of Israel and the Gods of Canaan: How Different Were They?", in: R. Margolin (ed), *Proceedings of the World Congress of Jewish Studies* 12, *Division A: The Bible and Its World*, Jerusalem: World Union of Jewish Studies, 47*–58*.

Gröndahl, F. 1967, *Die Personennamen der Texte aus Ugarit*, Studia Pohl 1, Roma: Pontificium Institutum Biblicum.

Hamori, E.J. 2008, *"When Gods Were Men": The Embodied God in Biblical and Near Eastern Literature*, Berlin: de Gruyter.

Healey, J.F. "Mot", in: K. van der Toorn – B. Becking – P.W. van der Horst (eds), *Dictionary of Deities and Demons in the Bible* (2nd ed.), Leiden: Brill, 598–603.

Harshav, B. 2007, "Metaphor and Frames of Reference: With Examples from Eliot, Rilke, Mayakovsky, Mandelshtam, Pound, Creeley, Amichai, and the *New York Times*", *Explorations in Poetics*, Stanford: Stanford University Press, 32–75.

Keel, O. 1990, "La glyptique du Tell Keisan (1971–1976)", in: O. Keel – M. Shuval – C. Uehlinger (eds), *Studien zu den Stempelsiegeln aus Palästina/Israel, Band III: Die Frühe Eisenzeit, Ein Workshop*, Orbis Biblicus et Orientalis 100, Freiburg/Göttingen: Universitätsverlag/Vandenhoeck&Ruprecht, 163–260.

Knafl, A.K. 2014, *Forming God: Divine Anthropomorphism in the Pentateuch*, Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns.

Korpel, M.C.A. 1990, *A Rift in the Clouds: Ugaritic and Hebrew Descriptions of the Divine*, Ugaritisch-Biblische Literatur 8, Münster: Ugarit-Verlag.

Lam, J. 2016, *Patterns of Sin in the Hebrew Bible: Metaphor, Culture, and the Making of a Religious Concept*, New York: Oxford University Press.

—. 2019, "Metaphor in the Ugaritic Literary Texts", *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 78, 37–57.

Long, G.A. 1994, "Dead or Alive? Literality and God-Metaphors in the Hebrew Bible", *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 62, 509–537.

Margalit, B. 1980, *A Matter of ›Life‹ and ›Death‹: A Study of the Baal-Mot Epic (CTA 4–5–6)*, Kevelaer: Verlag Butzon&Bercker.

Mazzini, G. 1997, "The Torture of Mot: For a Reading of KTU 1.6 V 30–35", *Studi epigrafici e linguistici sul Vicino Oriente Antico* 14, 23–28.

Moran, R. 1989, "Seeing and Believing: Metaphor, Image, and Force", *Critical Inquiry* 16, 87–112.

Pardee, D. 1997a, "The Ba'lu Myth (1.86)", in: W.W. Hallo – L. Younger (eds), *The Context of Scripture, Volume One: Canonical Compositions from the Biblical World*, Leiden: Brill, 241–274.

—. 1997b, "Dawn and Dusk (1.87)", in: W.W. Hallo – L. Younger (eds), *The Context of Scripture, Volume One: Canonical Compositions from the Biblical World*, Leiden: Brill, 274–283.

—. 2000, *Les textes rituels*, RSO 12, Paris: Éditions Recherche sur les Civilisations.

—. 2009, "A New Join of Fragments of the Baal Cycle", in: J.D. Schloen (ed), *Exploring the Longue Durée: Essays in Honor of Lawrence E. Stager*, Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 377–390.

Pitard, W.T. 1998, "The Binding of Yamm: A New Edition of the Ugaritic Text *KTU* 1.83", *Journal of Ancient Near Eastern Studies* 57, 261–280.

Porter, B.N. (ed) 2009, *What Is a God? Anthropomorphic and Non-Anthropomorphic Aspects of Deity in Ancient Mesopotamia*, Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns.

Roche-Hawley, C. 2012, "Procédés d'écriture des noms de divinités ougaritaines en cunéiforme mésopotamien", in: C. Roche-Hawley – R. Hawley (eds), *Scribes et érudits dan l'orbite de Babylone*, Paris: de Boccard, 149–178.

Schaeffer, C.F.-A. 1956, "Recueil des sceaux et cylindres hittites imprimés sur les tablettes des Archives Sud du palais de Ras Shamra suivi de considérations sur les pratiques sigillographiques des rois d'Ugarit", in: C. F.-A. Schaeffer (ed), *Ugaritica III: Sceaux et cylindres hittites, épée gravée du cartouche de Mineptah, tablettes chypro-minoennes et autres découvertes nouvelles de Ras Shamra*, Paris: Geuthner, 1–86.

Schwartz, H. 2010, "Does God Have a Body? The Problem of Metaphor and Literal Language in Biblical Interpretation", in: S.T. Kamionkowski – W. Kim (eds), *Bodies, Embodiment, and Theology of the Hebrew Bible*, Library of Hebrew Bible/Old Testament Studies 465, New York: T&T Clark, 201–237.

Scurlock, J. 2011, "Death and the Maidens: A New Interpretive Framework for KTU 1.23", *Ugarit Forschungen* 43, 411–434.

Shaw, I., and Nicholson, P. 1995, *The Dictionary of Ancient Egypt*, New York: Harry N. Abrams.

Smith, M.S. 1988, "Divine Form and Size in Ugaritic and Pre-exilic Israelite Religion", *Zeitschrift f*ür *die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft* 100, 424–427.

—. 1994, *The Ugaritic Baal Cycle, Volume I: Introduction with Text, Translation and Commentary of KTU 1.1–1.2*, Leiden: Brill.

—. 2006, *The Rituals and Myths of the Feast of the Goodly Gods of KTU/CAT 1.23: Royal Constructions of Opposition, Intersection, Integration, and Domination*, Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature.

Smith, M.S. – Pitard, W.T. 2009, *The Ugaritic Baal Cycle, Volume II: Introduction with Text, Translation and Commentary of KTU/CAT 1.3–1.4*, Leiden: Brill.

Sommer, B.D. 2009, *The Bodies of God and the World of Ancient Israel*, New York: Cambridge University Press.

Stern, J. 1983, "Metaphor and Grammatical Deviance", *Nous* 17, 577–599.

—. 2000, *Metaphor in Context*, Cambridge: The MIT Press.

Wyatt, N. 1977, "The Identity of *Mt-w-Šr*", *Ugarit Forschungen* 9, 379–381.

—. 1992, "The Pruning of the Vine in KTU 1.23", *Ugarit Forschungen* 24, 426–430.

Aššur is King!
The Metaphorical Implications of Embodiment, Personification, and Transference in Ancient Assyria

Davide Nadali (Sapienza Università di Roma)

"*La metafora ci appare come un'illuminazione diversa delle cose, come una luce radente che illuminasse il rilievo di un dipinto. La metafora è un presentimento del sapere totale*"

José Saramago[1]

Introduction

Metaphors can be clearly recognized in the rhetoric of ancient Assyrian inscriptions and, if used by the ancient scribes, they necessarily had a function and meaning, being based on a system of reference and transfer, as implied by the meaning of metaphor itself. In particular, the metaphor is an expedient of the language and communication and it is expressively used to emphasize concepts and to translate theoretical and abstract ideas and notions into reality and something material, tangible, and visible. Within the Assyrian literary compositions, metaphors are largely employed to describe situations, emotions, and special conditions: metaphors serve as a rhetoric device of speech and poetry to express with alluring words and imageries moments, feelings, and behaviours that directly descend from a common shared understanding of the reference. This is especially evident in the use of denoting people (such as enemies for example) as specific animals (e.g. bear and fox) compared to the Assyrian king who is and acts as a lion and a bull: the categories of animals are not casual and they automatically imply a connotation of the enemies as inferior, coward, and devil, on one hand, and of the Assyrian king as superior, brave and honest, thus expressing a moral judgement and provoking a resulting emotion, on the other.[2]

1 Saramago J. 2019, *Diario dell'anno del nobel: l'ultimo quaderno di Lanzarote, Milano: Feltrinelli* (Italian translation of *Último Caderno de Lanzarote. O diário do ano do Nobel*, Porto: Porto Editora, 2018).

2 Milano 2005; Kövecses 2017.

Therefore, is analysis of the use of metaphors in Assyrian culture possible? Are metaphors a way of expression and key to understanding how ancient Assyrians conceived and represented the world? Both questions have positive answers: not only has the topic been already touched on by scholars,[3] but also the significant linguistic turn within ancient studies had specifically pushed the research further, not only to recognize the use of a metaphorical system of communication, but to analyse the meaning of such references within the discourse of ancient texts and the implications they had on the recipients, with the construction and presentation of connections to things and bodies via the allusions to images and descriptions that, as we now know, are not exclusively mental but embodied:[4] metaphors evoke images and, consequently, one can properly state that images have metaphorical implications and nuances since they in fact embody meaning, on one hand, and they communicate meaning, on the other.[5]

In this respect, this contribution specifically focuses on the interplay between texts and images: in fact, I do not want to deal with the linguistic use of metaphors, but rather I prefer to investigate how metaphors in words and pictures interact and work in a complementary manner. Starting from the announcement that the priests of Aššur make on the day of the coronation of the new king, I think that the definition has not only a magic and ritual function establishing that the human person chosen by the god Aššur is the king, but it also discloses deeper implications on the reciprocity and dialogue between humans and the divine, namely the materialization of the divine power via the body of the king and the legitimization of the Assyrian king via the body of the god, passing from a vocal proclamation to a physical and tangible presence of the god in the body of the king and the king acting on behalf of Aššur through his actions (namely his body). This means, as suggested by Tilley, to take "metaphor out of the language and into artefacts":[6] more interestingly, he also points out that "rather than mirroring the world, speech can be conceived as an extension of the human body in the world, a kind of artefact, by means of which we extend ourselves in the world, gain knowledge of it and alter it."[7] Tilley's intuition goes precisely in the direction of stressing the importance of the body as the organism that lives and acts in the world, changing it: what does the ritual public proclamation "Aššur is King!" mean if not the blessing and approval of the human king who goes in the world, extends the knowledge and power of Aššur, thereby precisely fulfilling the directive of the national god?[8]

As already indicated, the translation of a concept and idea via metaphor, expresses emotions or, in using the words of the Italian philosopher Giambattista Vico, it can be said that poetry (by means of metaphor) "lends sense and passion to senseless things."[9]

---

3 For what concerns ancient Assyria, see for example Ponchia 1987 and 2009; Van De Mieroop 2015.

4 Lakoff and Johnson 2003; Gallese and Lakoff 2005; Cuccio and Fontana 2017.

5 For an attempt of the use of metaphors in pictures, specifically in the Assyrian context, see the analysis by Portuese 2018.

6 Tilley 1999, 35.

7 *Ibid*., 34.

8 Machinist 2006, 157, 187; Liverani 2017, 3–18.

9 "[...] la Metafora, ch'allora è vieppiù lodata, quando alle cose insensate ella dà senso, e passione per la Metafisica sopra qui ragionata" (Vico 2018, 932).

In this regard, Vico's thought is particularly illuminating as it points to the materiality of metaphors, actually entering and, one would say, anticipating the matter of recent material turns in the recent trends of cognitive archaeology.[10] In his thought, sensitivity is the first capacity of first people: human beings are immersed in matter in their bodies and are unable to process impulses rationally so they transport them outside, animating the world and giving birth to myth and religion. Sense and passions are understood by Vico as not only sensations that provide images that would therefore have a *representative* function. For Vico they are also feelings that give life to images that would therefore have a *projective* function: I think that this idea of a projective function of the images created and evoked by metaphors can be fruitfully used and applied to explain the implications of the use of a metaphorical language, both verbally and visually. In particular, if metaphors produce images, what can we say about the metaphorical implications of images themselves? In fact, if poetry and metaphors make use of images to translate immaterial things into material ones, how do images (that are material *per se*) act and work in the system of communication? Can they be considered as representations of projections? Too often images are considered and treated as a mere visualization of texts and words, while they are an independent system of communication, sharing something with texts in a complementary and mutual way: in the context of the Assyrian images, in fact, one cannot simply conclude that palace bas-reliefs are the visualization of the military events recorded in the Annals of the king; of course, visual narratives are based upon the military conquests that are also celebrated in the royal official inscriptions, but they are not a mimetic visual adaptation of the content of texts.[11] The same happens for metaphors: the verbal metaphor not only produces mental images, but those images are materially and concretely shaped, and therefore they act on their own, being both the representation and the projection of a concept (a thing without sense) that also conveys emotions, feelings, and, as Vico says, passion: this seems indeed particularly true when we think of the use of the human body, its parts and its senses to decode, understand, and eventually represent the world around us;[12] in this respect, it is only through the action of the human body of the king that the inanimate (to use Vico's attribute) plans of the god Aššur become real. At the same time, if verbal metaphors evoke mental images, it can also be true that visual metaphors evoke and resort to language in order to be interpreted and understood: this is precisely explained by the interplay between texts and images that however should not be limited to the fact that images make words visible and that words explain, as a caption, the figures.

But why do we use metaphors? Metaphors convey other meanings, or perhaps it is better to say that they point out the real meaning of a concept by emphasizing aspects and references to the world around us: in particular, metaphors make humans to share a common vision of the world by using expressions built upon a common language and system

10 As argued by Tilley 1999.

11 Nadali 2019a.

12 Vico 2018, 932–933: "quello che è degno d'osservazione, che 'n tutte le Lingue la maggior parte dell'espressioni d'intorno a cose inanimate sono fatte con trasporti del corpo umano, e delle sue parti, e degli umani sensi, e dell'umane passioni."

of references to the things, objects, and the living around them. However, this does not imply that all metaphors have a universal value for all cultures and languages, but they need to be analysed contextually: if metaphors are a universal mechanism to be found in the functioning of the human brain, they are at the same time different and vary from one culture to another and even within the same culture.[13]

The metaphorical verbal and visual expressions referring to animals and parts of the body are a direct reference to known and even named entities that clearly provide a reminder of, evoke, and point out a transferred meaning: the power of metaphors is the continuous interchange and conveyance of meaning, a concept becomes real and concrete via its translation into a verbal and/or visual metaphor. Metaphors are not only a rhetorical device, but they are a mental and embodied operation: this operation can be both conscious and unconscious. On the one hand, the metaphor is intentionally used to express a transferred meaning (from the object/animal/item to the characteristics it conveys); on the other, metaphors can be the result of an automatic and implicit verbal and visual code that is based on the mechanism by which we (with our body as projection) see, interpret and communicate with the external world and the others around us.

Metaphors in Assyria

Within the Assyrian inscriptions, scribes often make use of similes to describe both the Assyrian king and his counterpart, the enemy king: similes are a rhetoric device and are built on the precise and direct reference between two parts – this is usually made clear by the use of the adverb "like". Indeed, similes and metaphors are often confused and exchanged, but, although they function on a system of reference and conveyance, they have different implications: while similes put two subjects on the same level (A is like B and, as consequence, one can infer that B is like A), metaphors are a system of expressions and combination of words that convey reference (as in fact similes do) and transport to semantic fields, implying concepts such as transfer or substitution (according to the usual Aristotelian interpretation of metaphors); however metaphors find a more correct and cogent explanation when the idea of substitution is combined with the notions of resemblance and interaction that are not in contrast, but they rather point to a dynamic and dialogic correlation between the elements that are compared.[14] Metaphors do not simply compare two parts, but they make one part share behaviours, emotions, and feelings of the other. Moreover, as we will see, while similes are built on reciprocity, metaphors are not.

Both Assyrian kings and the enemy kings are compared to animals, with a clear distinction between the animals used to exalt the Assyrian monarch and the animals used to describe bad qualities, such as cowardice, wickedness, and disloyalty of the enemies. Similes are based on the typical linguistic construction of the like system: the phraseology

13 Lakoff and Johnson 2003, 57–58; Kövecses 2005.

14 See the considerations by Ricœur (1975, 221–271) on the implication of the resemblance in relation to the substitution and interactions.

therefore implies an exact comparison between the king and the animal, with an implicit metaphorical transfer of the qualities of the animal to the person.

Within the Assyrian similes used to describe the heroic quality of the Assyrian king, the lion is the predominant element of comparison and reference:[15] texts explicitly say that the Assyrian king is belligerent – (he fights) like a lion – and more directly, the Assyrian king states that he is a lion. In this regard, the metaphor of the king-lion becomes clearly defined in the metaphorical images of the representation of the duel between the Assyrian king and the lion in the palace wall reliefs[16] and, even more interestingly, in the Assyrian state stamp seals.[17] The Assyrian state seal represents two, apparently, opposite characters and qualities: the human-lion (the king) faces the animal-lion who, standing on its hind legs, looks at the king into the eyes (eye-to-eye) and acts as a human being; if the Assyrian king, being a lion and fighting like a lion, acquires the positive quality of pride bravery and strength of the animal, why do images represent the king killing the lion? If enemies are compared to animals such as the bear or the fox,[18] why do the palace wall reliefs and the state stamp seal not represent the duel between the Assyrian king and those negatively connoted animals?

Based on the metaphor that the king is a lion, thus implying not only a resemblance but even a substitution, the killing of the animal by the Assyrian king would represent a self-killing, a suicide: the value expressed by the metaphor explains the nature of the image that is purposely chosen for the state stamp seals. I suggest that the construction of the figurative motif of the Assyrian state seal is a synthesis of simile and metaphor: the image is a visual simile – the king is *like* the lion – and the representation of killing the lion (the action) has the metaphorical meaning of identifying the two poles of the dichotomy nature / culture and uncivilised world / the civilised system of the cities and the Assyrian State em-

15 The figure of the lion, with all its implications linked to heroic and brave positive values that can eventually assume the negative connotations of threat and disorder, is very common in the ancient civilizations of the Ancient Near East, since the most ancient times, both in visual records (if one thinks, for example, of the Lion-Hunt Stele from Uruk) and Sumerian and Akkadian literature (see Watanabe 2002, 42–56, 89–92; Strawn 200, 131–228; Ulanowski 2015). In this respect, the Assyrian kings inherit and take on a long-lasting widespread tradition, not exclusively Mesopotamian but with deepest roots in Syria (starting from 3rd millennium BC visual documents from Ebla, Matthiae 1989; Peyronel 2019) and in the Levant (with the use of the lion-metaphor in the Hebrew Bible that, as rightly pointed out by Strawn 2005, 238, does not necessarily depend on an Assyrian loan and influence; in fact, the use of lions as distinctive divine and royal element in Syrian art, from the 3rd millennium BC, represents the more suitable background from where Southern Levantine visual and textual lion-references might have been taken). In fact, Assyrian art itself might have had a Western (Syrian) origin and influence, particularly in the design of the duel between the king, on one side, and the lion, on the other, around a central axis (Winter 1982 and 1989; Matthiae 1989; Aro 2009).

16 See the lion-hunt bas-reliefs of Ashurbanipal in rooms S and S' of the North Palace at Nineveh, Barnett 1976, pls. XLIX, LVI.

17 Nadali 2009–2010.

18 Milano 2005.

bodied by the king.[19] This interpretation is in fact valid and it precisely corresponds to the prerogatives of the Assyrian king in pacifying and protecting the world by eliminating evil and dangerous animals; indeed, the representation of enemies as animals is also part of the Assyrian vision of the world, that is enemies as animals and because of their animal nature must be eliminated through military actions. However, I think that the meaning of the lion-combat image of the state stamp seal points to the simile "the king is a lion": because of this association, the king can (must?) be the only lion without any rival. In this regard, the killing of the lion does not only involve the broad contrast between two domains (animals *vs* humans), but it is rather a personal affair, the king in front of his exact counterpart, his *alter ego* and I therefore suggest that this special condition explains the metaphorical consequence of the simile, where the reciprocal connection (the king is like the lion so the lion is like the king) is, in some way, if not broken, then suspended or at least re-adjusted.

Lion-hunt narratives are sculpted on the palace wall reliefs of Assurnasirpal II at Nimrud and Ashurbanipal at Nineveh; on the other hand, the lion-combat occurs on the state stamp seals of the Assyrian administration: if lion-hunt narratives (with the killing of the lions and the libation on the corpses) can in fact be interpreted as the representation of the opposition between human civilization and nature, the lion-combat of the state seals summarises the prerogatives of the Assyrian king who, being a lion, cannot tolerate and accept any other lion. Indeed, in looking at the state seals and the later lion-hunt reliefs of Ashurbanipal, a process of inverse quotation can be recognised: while seals usually refer to palace wall panels,[20] the icon of the king killing the lion with the sword is exactly reproduced in the bas-reliefs of the North Palace.[21] In this regard, the image of the state seals is not a framed adaptation from a longer complex narrative; on the contrary, it is re-used and inserted within a narrative as the final moment of the confrontation between the king and the feline.

The choice of the lion-combat as the distinctive icon of state stamp seals cannot be casual: the image expresses at its best, within the circular frame of the stamp, sometimes surrounded by a cuneiform inscription naming the Assyrian king, the supremacy of the lion-king on the lion-animal. This visual sign not only makes the metaphor concrete, but the seal makes the metaphor travel: the object is carried by the Assyrian official in the territory of the empire and the image is impressed on any goods belonging to the crown

19 Maul 1995; Westenholz 2000, 114. The lion can in fact also be employed as a metaphor for the enemy (in the Hebrew Bible the lion stands for the Assyrians who are, in that context, the enemy; Machinist 1983; Strawn 2005, 52, 134): in this respect, its anger, wildness, and savagery are negative and pejorative qualities, a threat to the order of the world. As a consequence, only when those qualities are referred to the king and mastered by the king (embodying them), do they acquire a positive aspect: it is interesting to note the diffusion of the iconography of the hero mastering wild animals (lions and bulls, not casually two species that have a royal value), as it happens in the cylinder seal of the Early Dynastic period of ancient Mesopotamia (Mayer-Opificius 2006). In this case, bulls and lions are the threat that needs to be controlled by the hero and the king.

20 Winter 2000, 79–81.

21 See fn. 15.

and any document emanated from the state.[22] The seal itself, bearing the visual metaphor, becomes a metaphor: the combination of the lion-combat and the validation effect of the use of the seal define what we can label a *meta-metaphor*, that is the occurrence of a metaphor within a metaphor or a metaphor doubled, squared. At this point, it is also important to single out the value of the seal as a material object: each official received this distinctive sign that entrusted him with the power and authority to act on behalf of the Assyrian king. The state seal was not the personal seal of the official nor it was the personal seal of the king: the visual metaphor of "the king is a lion" worked as the personification of the state administration and the possession of this seal also functioned as a "fetish" giving power,[23] but also warranty and protection to the beholder.

As already pointed out, similes are normally based on a direct and reciprocal relationship: A is like B and therefore one might conclude that B is like A. On the contrary, we can say that metaphors are less direct, but they open a broader kaleidoscopic range of references and interplays. In this regard, the proclamation of the Assyrian king is an interesting example of the functioning of metaphors: the wording "Aššur is king" can be seen as a match for the expression "the king is a lion." However, it is not an exact equation, it is not based on reciprocity, the king is not Aššur: to a certain extent, it is correct to speak of the divinity of the Assyrian kingship,[24] but not in the way that the king is the god and is deified.

The Assyrian king, who is in fact called vicar (*iššiʾakkû*) and *šangû* of the god,[25] represents the god Aššur:[26] the two terms point to the office of kingship having both administrative and cultic duties. In the ritual proclamation the figure of the god prevails: the formalization of the person who becomes king of Assyria happens because the name of the god is invoked; Aššur, who is already king of the gods as described in the Tablet of Destinies,[27] is transferring his kingship to his chosen one who, by virtue of his physical and moral qualities, becomes king of Assyria.

The designation via the invocation of the name of Aššur not only explains the divine origin of the royal power,[28] but it also founds the special relationship existing between the national god and the king: once designated, the king acts on behalf and with the reassurance of Aššur;[29] not only does the king relies upon him for the positive outcome of the annual military campaigns and the success of any battle,[30] but he also has a duty to report

22 Nadali 2009–2010.

23 On the meaning of fetish in visual art, see Mitchell 2005, 188–196 and Nadali forthcoming.

24 Pongratz-Leisten 2015, 225–228.

25 On the meaning and use of the two terms, see Machinist 2006, 153, 155; Pongratz-Leisten 2015, 202–205.

26 Parker 2011, 364–365.

27 George 1986, 134.

28 Not only was voice involved, but also touch: in the Royal Coronation Ritual (SAA XX 7) it is expressly said that the priest of Aššur "slaps the king's cheek in their presence" and thus says "Aššur is king, Aššur is king!".

29 Liverani 2017, 27–34.

30 As reported in the annals of Assurnasirpal II, while Šamaš, in the accession year, gives the Assyrian king the sceptre (political instrument) for the shepherding of the people (Grayson 1991, A.0.101.1

the results of the military achievements. This is made by a letter that the king directly addresses to the god Aššur in the city of Assur:[31] the reading was probably made publicly in front of the people of the city and this was the only occasion where non-elite people were involved in official ceremonies.[32]

"Aššur is king" can thus work as a metaphor of phenomenology: the divine becomes concrete via the body of the person who was chosen to be the king of the Land of Aššur. Although god and king are clearly distinct, they share intents, aims and, to a certain extent, physical features:[33] the person called by name by Aššur to be king and to be put on the throne of Assyria needs to have a perfect body that can be the recipient of the divine choice. In this respect, the Assyrian king has to have the *physique du role*, a prerequisite for being selected by the god to embody the kingship:[34] this would explain the visual rendering and appearance of the images of the kings that share, from the 9th to the 7th century BC, the same recurrent facial characteristics. Again, the notion of resemblance implied by Ricœur in the analysis of metaphor also occurs in the domain of images:[35] the face, within a metaphorical system of reference, works as a metonymy for the whole; we perceive the person in terms of his face and therefore act on those perceptions (also in terms of interpreting and sharing emotions).[36] The definition of the facial features leads to the question of the portrait in Assyrian art: can we speak of portraits of the Assyrian king? Can we really recognize facial distinctions in different royal pictures? As Irene Winter pointed out, the question of Assyrian portraiture should not be explained in terms of correct rendering and translation of physiognomy of the individual; rather, the faces of the kings, because they are based on coded references to beard, eyes, and nose, are the portrait of *an* Assyrian king or, as a consequence, of the Assyrian kingship.[37] The precise reference to coded facial features makes, beyond stylistic differences that can be recognized from the 9th to the 7th century BC, all Assyrian faces identical: this led to the denial of the existence of portraits (at least according to our common acceptance) and the consequent idea of repetitiveness of Assyrian art. However, once we know that the chosen king must have a perfect body, that those perfections are based on recurrent approved physical features, and that the use of the term portrait needs to be correctly connoted, it is clear how the repetitiveness is not a lack of skills and originality of the Assyrian artists, but rather a required mark.[38]

---

i 43b–54a), Aššur gives the Assyrian king "his merciless weapon" (military instrument) to defeat enemies and conquer new territories (Grayson 1991, A.0.101.1 i 17b–18a). Again, in the rite in the Assyrian military camp, the weapon of Aššur (the arrow) is invoked (Deller 1992, 341–346), and it might be supposed that the winged deity with arrow and bow in Assurnasirpal II's bas-reliefs at Nimrud might consequently be identified with Aššur (Nadali 2019b, 666).

31 Fales 1991 and 2017.

32 Liverani 2010, 230.

33 Bonatz 2017, 58.

34 Pongratz-Leisten 2015, 208–209.

35 See fn. 14.

36 Wagner-Durand 2017.

37 Winter 2009.

38 Nadali 2012, 586.

What about the representation of the god Aššur?[39] Once the coded references to godship (such as the horned headgear or the animals on which the god usually stands) are isolated, the body and facial features of the god nearly perfectly match the ones of the Assyrian king: or, one could argue the reverse process is more correct, that is the body and face of the king reflect the face of the god. The special correspondence, pointing out the perfection of the body shape of the king, is expressly explained by the fact that the king is the *tamšīl ili*:[40] the Akkadian word *tamšilu* points to a special relation, based on resemblance and correspondence,[41] implying that between the god and the king a dialogue and a connection exist, but the king is dependent on the god.[42]

In this regard, it is clear that the king is a product of the god, "the creation of his hands":[43] kingship is entrusted with divinity; on the other hand, the king acts as the representative and armed branch of the god, but he is not the god, he does not substitute the deity. Kingship and king: it might be a subtle, non-sense, difference, but while the office may be considered divine, the officiant is not.[44] In this regard, it is interesting to note that the Assyrian kings refer to *ṣalam šarrūtīya* ("image of my kingship") when they want to indicate their own images: usually interpreted as a statue, *ṣalmu* can in fact be any other visual type representing the king or, as the Assyrians themselves state, the kingship (*šarrūtu*).[45] Therefore, *ṣalam šarrūtīya* does not refer to the representation of the king, i.e.: it is not a portrait, nor when the specification *tamšīl bunnannîya* is added;[46] rather it is the representation of the kingship that, by virtue of the divine selection made by Aššur, temporally becomes a property of the Assyrian king – this explains the addition of the suffix *-īya*, 'my'. Zainab Bahrani suggests that *ṣalam šarrūtīya* can be translated as "image or physical manifestation of my kingship",[47] that might be further personalized with the reference to the facial features of the king – *bunnannû* refers to the details of the face, in particular the eyes and nose.[48]

The physical and facial qualities define the perfect body of the king who can actually be chosen by Aššur because of this perfection; however, notwithstanding this, they are not enough to support an automatic substitution: while Aššur is king (he is already the king of the gods and via the coronation ritual he becomes king of the Assyrians through his chosen human emissary), the Assyrian king acquires the status of monarch without sharing the divine nature of Aššur, but embodying Aššur. Examples of embodiment of gods by the kings existed in Assyria and they are expressly indicated in texts. Incantations

39 Berlejung 2007, 15–18.
40 Pongratz-Leisten 2015, 209.
41 On the meaning and interpretation of the Akkadian word *tamšīlu*, see Glassner 2017; Nadali 2018.
42 Nadali 2018, 202.
43 SAA III 11, l. 15.
44 Machinist 2006, 186–188.
45 Morandi 1988, 105–106; Winter 1995 and. 1997, 364–366; Bahrani 2003, 135; Glassner 2017; Nadali 2012 and 2018.
46 Winter 1997, 368–369; Berlejung 1998, 66–68; Nadali 2018, 203.
47 Bahrani 2003, 135.
48 Nadali and Verderame 2019.

and ritual texts testify the use of linguistic construction such as *šarru ṣalam Šamaš* or *šarru ṣalam Marduk*:[49] the term *ṣalmu* indicates an independent being, standing for the god, acting as the god, by simply being the god himself.[50] However, this special occurrence needs to be contextualised: rites and incantations are part of a special category of texts, with magic implications and qualities. In these contexts, the king can be the *ṣalmu* of the god, but only momentarily because he is called to fulfil duties and functions that are both required and authorised by the texts themselves.[51]

In this regard, the remarks recently made by Jean-Jacques Glassner on Ashurbanipal's so-called coronation hymn (SAA III 11) are extremely interesting: the proclamation "Aššur is king — indeed Aššur is king! Assurbanipal is the [representative] of Aššur, the creation of his hands" is differently rendered as "(Le dieu) Assur est roi! Assurément, (le dieu) Assur est roi! Assurbanipal est à *l'image du (dieu) Assur*, il est la création de ses mains!".[52] As for the other occurrences when the king is called the image of Marduk or Šamaš, the king is – in the precise moment when he is designated as the Assyrian king – the image of Aššur or, as Bahrani would say, the "physical manifestation" of the god: through this rite and invocation, the Assyrian king acquires and shares virtues and aspects of Aššur and for this reason I think that the proclamation precisely works as a metaphoric formula that makes the invisible visible, the god Aššur is embodied by the king, although the king is not totally identical to the god (he is not a mimetic copy).[53] This special relationship and encounter between the god and the king is moreover emphasised by the fact that the coronation occurred in the temple of the national god in the city of Assur, in front of Aššur, namely in front of his *ṣalmu*:[54] the god, already manifested in his *ṣalmu*, manifests one more time in the body of the king who, metaphorically, is in fact the *ṣalam* ^{d}*Aššur*.

Conclusion

The evaluation of the use and implication of metaphors contribute to understanding how the world and the relationships between categories, entities, and stakeholders were conceived, explained, and translated verbally and visually. Senseless things become clearer, and metaphors are no longer a question of rhetoric style, but an embodied process that

49 Machinist 2006, 165–174; Nadali and Verderame 2019, 237.

50 Nadali 2018, 201. Pongratz-Leisten (2015, 219–225) speaks of the "homogeneity in action between the Gods and the King" pointing out the capacity and authority of the king in acting, changing and, I would argue, manifesting and sharing the divine "radiance" and "effulgence". This special royal characterization and condition is clearly described in *Tukulti-Ninurta Epic* where all these specificities of the Assyrian kingship are established: the king is radiant, vehement, and frightful, he is made of the "flesh of the gods" (*šīr ilāni*) and finally he is the "image of Enlil" (*ṣalam* ^{d}*Enlil*). See Machinist 2006, 160–164.

51 Frahm 2013, 102–103.

52 *Aš-šur*-DÙ.[A *A]LA[N *š*]*á* ^{d}A*š-šur bi-nu-ut* ŠU$_{11}$*-šú* (Glassner 2017, 219). Emphasis mine.

53 Nadali 2012, 584.

54 SAA XX 7, ll. 14–30.

discloses dialogic interconnections and correspondences among different domains: in particular, the examples that have been taken into consideration here have a precise visual and material manifestation.

The metaphor of the "king is a lion" not only works in the reference and allusion to the lion-animal, but it concretely works as being an image carved onto the Assyrian state seal and impressed on the goods belonging to the crown: the meaning of the metaphor can be rightly considered distributive (or projective according to Vico's definition), towards the officials who were provided with the lion-combat seal and towards the actions that physically marked goods and documents as royal.

The metaphorical implication of "Aššur is king" is the result of ritual chain reactions that, by virtue of being ritual, necessarily change the status quo: the person chosen by the god Aššur becomes king of Assyria, he therefore acts as the physical manifestation of god, he can portray himself as the physical manifestation of the Assyrian kingship and, because of this, he can – he must – keep a constant dialogue with his Creator.

Bibliography

Aro, S. 2009, "The Origins of the Artistic Interactions between the Assyrian Empire and North Syria Revisited", in: M. Luukko – S. Svärd – R. Mattila (eds), *Of God(s), Trees, Kings, and Scholars. Neo-Assyrian and Related Studies in Honour of Simo Parpola*, Studia Orientalia 106, Helsinki: Finnish Oriental Society, 9–17.

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

Barnett, R.D. 1976, *Sculptures from the North Palace of Ashurbanipal at Nineveh (668–627 B.C.)*, London: British Museum Publications.

Berlejung, A. 1998, *Die Theologie der Bilder. Herstellung und Einweihung von Kultbildern in Mesopotamien und die alttestamentliche Bilderpolemik*, Orbis Biblicus et Orientalis 162, Fribourg/Göttingen: Universitätsverlag/Vandenhoeck&Ruprecht.

—. 2007, "Die Reduktion von Komplexität. Das theologische Profil einer Gottheit und seine Umsetzung in der Ikonographie am Beispiel des Gottes Aššur im Assyrien des 1. Jt. v. Chr.", in: B. Groneberg – H. Spieckermann (eds), *Die Welt der Götterbilder* (Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft 376), Berlin: de Gruyter, 9–56.

Bonatz, D. 2017, "Der stumme Schrei – Kritische Überlegungen zu Emotionen als Untersuchungsfeld der altorientalischen Bildwissenschaft", in: S. Kipfer (ed), *Visualizing Emotions in the Ancient Near East*, Orbis Biblicus et Orientalis 285, Fribourg/Göttingen: Universitätsverlag/Vandenhoeck&Ruprecht, 55–74.

Cuccio, V. – Fontana, S. 2017, "Embodied Simulation and Metaphorical Gestures", in: F. Ervas – E. Gola – M.G. Rossi (eds), *Metaphor in Communication, Science and Education*, Berlin: de Gruyter, 77–91.

Deller, K. 1992, "Neuassyrische Rituale für den Einsatz der Götterstreitwagen", *Baghdader Mitteilungen* 23, 341–346.

Fales, F.M. 1991, "Narrative and Ideological Variations in the Account of Sarong's Eighth Campaign", in: M. Cogan – I. Eph'al (eds), *Ah, Assyria... Studies in Assyrian History and Ancient Near Eastern Historiography Presented to Hayim Tadmor*, Scripta Hierosolymitana XXXIII, Jerusalem: Magnes Press, 129–147.

—. 2017, "The Letter to the God Aššur Recounting Sargon's Eighth Campaign (714 BCE) (4.42)", in: K. Lawson Younger Jr. (ed), *The Context of Scripture. Volume 4: Supplements*, Leiden/Boston: Brill, 199–215.

Frahm, E. 2013, "Rising Suns and Falling Stars: Assyrian Kings and the Cosmos", in: J.A. Hill – P. Jones – Morales, A.J. (eds), *Experiencing Power, Generating Authority: Cosmos, Politics, and the Ideology of Kingship in Ancient Egypt and Mesopotamia*, Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 97–120.

Gallese, V. and Lakoff, G. 2005, "The Brain's Concepts: The Role of the Sensory-Motor System in Conceptual Knowledge", *Cognitive Neuropsychology* 21/3, 455–479.

George, A.R. 1986, "Sennacherib and the Tablet of Destinies", *Iraq* 48, 133–146.

Glassner, J.-J. 2017, "Comment presentifier l'invisible? Reflexions autour des termes *ṣalmu*, *tamšīlu* et *uṣurtu*", *Journal of Cuneiform Studies* 69, 213–220.

Grayson, A.K. 1991, *Assyrian Rulers of the Early First Millennium BC I (1114–859 BC)*, Royal Inscriptions of Mesopotamia, Assyrian Periods 2, Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

Kövecses, Z. 2005, *Metaphor in Culture. Universality and Variation*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

—. 2017, "Metaphor and Metonimy in Folk and Expert Theories of Emotion", in: F. Ervas – E. Gola – M.G. Rossi (eds), *Metaphor in Communication, Science and Education*, Berlin: de Gruyter, 29–41.

Lakoff, G. – Johnson, M. 2003, *Metaphors We Live By* (2nd ed.), Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

Liverani, M. 2010, "'Untruthful Steles': Propaganda and Reliability in Ancient Mesopotamia", in: S.C. Melville – A.L. Slotsky (eds), *Opening the Tablet Box. Near Eastern Studies in Honor of Benjamin R. Foster*, Leiden: Brill, 229–244.

—. 2017, *Assiria. La preistoria dell'imperialismo*, Roma/Bari: Laterza.

Machinist, P. 1983, "Assyria and Its Image in the First Isaiah", *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 103, 719–737.

—. 2006, "Kingship and Divinity in Imperial Assyria", in: G. Beckman – J.L. Theodore (eds), *Text, Artifact, and Image. Revealing Ancient Israelite Religion*, Providence: Brown Judaic Studies, 152–188.

Matthiae, P. 1989, "Old Syrian Ancestors of Some Neo-Assyrian Figurative Symbols of Kingship", in: L. De Meyer – E. Haerinck (eds), *Archeologia Iranica et Orientalis. Miscellanea in honorem Louis Vanden Berghe*, Gent: Peeters, 367–391.

Maul, S. 1995, "Das "dreifache Königtum" - Überlegungen zu einer Sonderform des neuassyrischen Königssiegels", in: U. Finkbeiner – R. Dittmann – H. Hauptmann (eds), *Beiträge zur Kulturgeschichte Vorderasiens. Festschrift für Rainer Michael Boehmer*, Mainz: Verlag Phillip von Zabern, 395–402.

Mayer-Opificius, R. 2006, "War and Warfare on Cylinder Seals in the Ancient Near East", in: P. Taylor (ed), *The Iconography of Cylinder Seals*, Warburg Institute Colloquia 9, London/Turin: Warbug Institute/Nino Aragno editore, 51–61.

Milano, L. 2005, "Il nemico bestiale. Su alcune connotazioni animalesche del nemico nella letteratura sumero-accadica", in: E. Cingano – A. Ghersetti – L. Milano (eds), *Animali tra zoologia, mito e letteratura nella cultura classica e orientale. Atti del convegno, Venezia, 22–23 maggio 2002*, Padova: Sargon, 47–67.

Mitchell, W.J.T. 2005, *What Do Pictures Want? The Lives and Loves of Images*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Morandi, D. 1988, "Stele e statue reali assire: localizzazione, diffusione e implicazioni ideologiche", *Mesopotamia* 23, 105–115.

Nadali, D. 2009–2010, "Neo-Assyrian State Seals: An Allegory of Power", *State Archives of Assyria Bulletin* XVIII, 215–244.

—. 2012, "Interpretations and Translations, Performativity and Embodied Simulation. Reflections on Assyrian Images", in: G.B. Lanfranchi – D. Morandi Bonacossi – C. Pappi – S. Ponchia (eds), *Leggo! Studies Presented to Frederick Mario Fales on the Occasion of His 65th Birthday*, Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 583–595.

—. 2018, "The Phenomenology of the Copy in Assyria: On the Coexistence of Two Beings", in: S. Di Paolo (ed), *Implementing Meanings: The Power of the Copy between Past, Present and Future*, Altertumskunde des Vorderen Orients 19, Münster: Ugarit Verlag, 195–208.

—. 2019a, "Images of Assyrian Sieges: What they Show, What We Know, What Can We Say", in: J. Armstrong – M. Trundle (eds), *Brill's Companion to Sieges in Ancient Mediterranean*, Leiden: Brill, 53–68.

—. 2019b, "The Doubling of the Image of the King: A Note on Slabs B-13 and B-23 in the Throne Room of Assurnasirpal II at Nimrud", in: M. D'Andrea – M.G. Micale – D. Nadali – S. Pizzimenti – A. Vacca (eds), *Pearls of the Past Studies on Near Eastern Art and Archaeology in Honour of Frances Pinnock*, marru 8, Münster: Zaphon, 661–675.

—. forthcoming, "Different Degrees of Empathy: On the Mobility of Images in Ancient Mesopotamia", to be published in a forthcoming *Festschrift*.

Nadali, D. – Verderame, L. 2019, "Neo-Assyrian Statues of Gods and Kings in Context. Integrating Textual, Archaeological and Iconographic Data on their Manufacture and Installation", *Altorientalische Forschungen* 46/2, 234–248.

Parker, B. 2011, "The Construction and Performance of Kingship in the Neo-Assyrian Empire", *Journal of Anthropological Research* 67, 357–386.

Peyronel, L. 2019, "Il ruggito del leone. Qualche osservazione sulle immagini ferine nel mondo siriano del III millennio a.C.", in: S. Valentini – G. Guarducci (eds), *Between Syria and the Highlands. Studies in Honor of Giorgio Buccellati and Marylin Kelly-Buccellati*, Studies on the Ancient Near East and the Mediterranean 3, Roma: Arbor Sapientiae, 323–334.

Ponchia, S. 1987, "Analogie, metafore e similitudini nelle iscrizioni reali assire: semantica e ideologia", *Oriens Antiquus* 26, 223–244.

—. 2009, "Some Reflections on Metaphor, Ambiguity and Literary Tradition", in: M. Luukko – S. Svärd – R. Mattila (eds), *Of God(s), Trees, Kings and Scholars. Neo-Assyrian and Related Studies in Honour of Simo Parpola*, Studia Orientalia 106, Helsinki: Finnish Oriental Society, 399–407.

Pongrazt-Leisten, B. 2005, *Religion and ideology in Assyria*, Studies in Ancient Near Eastern Records 6, Berlin: de Gruyter.

Portuese, L. 2018, "Metaphorical Allusions to Life-Giving Plants in Neo-Assyrian Texts and Images", *Antiguo Oriente* 16, 93–116.

Ricœur, P. 1975, *La métaphore vive*, Paris: Editions du Seuil.

Strawn, B.A. 2005, *What Is Stronger than a Lion? Leonine Image and Metaphor in the Hebrew Bible and the Ancient Near East*, Orbis Biblicus et Orientalis 212, Fribourg/Göttingen: Universitätsverlag/Vandenhoeck&Ruprecht.

Tilley, C. 1999, *Metaphor and Material Culture*, Oxford: Blackwell.

Ulanowski, K. 2015, "The Metaphor of the Lion in Mesopotamian and Greek Civilization", in: R. Rollinger – E. van Dongen (eds), *Mesopotamia in the Ancient World Impact, Continuities, Parallels. Proceedings of the Seventh Symposium of the Melammu Project Held in Obergurgl, Austria, November 4–8, 2013*, Münster: Ugarit Verlag, 255–284.

Van De Mieroop, M. 2015, "Metaphors of Massacre in Assyrian Royal Inscription", *Kaskal* 12, 291–317.

Vico, G.B. 2018, *La Scienza Nuova. Le tre edizioni del 1725, 1730 e 1734*, Milano: Bompiani.

Wagner-Durand, E. 2017, "Visualization of Emotions – Potentials and Obstacles. A Response to Dominik Bonatz", in: S. Kipfer (ed), *Visualizing Emotions in the Ancient Near East*, Orbis Biblicus et Orientalis 285, Fribourg/Göttingen: Universitätsverlag/Vandenhoeck&Ruprecht, 75–93.

Watanabe, C.E. 2002, *Animal Symbolism in Mesopotamia – A Contextual Approach*, Wiener Offene Orientalistik 1, Wien: Insitut für Altorientalistik.

Westenholz, J.G. 2000, "The King, the Emperor, and the Empire: Continuity and Discontinuity of Royal Representation in Text and Image", in: S. Aro – R.M. Whiting (eds), *The Heirs of Assyria*, Melammu Symposia I, Helsinki: The Neo-Assyrian Text Corpus Project, 99–125.

Winter, I.J. 1982, "Art as Evidence for Interaction: Relations between the Assyrian Empire and North Syria", in: H.-J. Nissen – J. Renger (eds), *Mesopotamien und seine Nachbarn: XXVe Rencontre Assyriologique Internationale (Berlin, 2–7 July 1978)*, *Berliner Beiträge zum Vorderen Orient* 1, Berlin: Reimer, 35–382.

—. 1989, "North Syrian Ivories and Tell Halaf Reliefs: The Impact of Luxury Goods upon 'Major' Arts", in: A. Leonard, Jr. – B. B. Williams (eds), *Essays in Ancient Civilization Presented to Helene J. Kantor*, Chicago: Oriental Institute, 321–332.

—. 1995, "Aesthetics in Ancient Mesopotamia", in: J.M. Sasson (ed), *Civilizations of the Ancient Near East* (Vol. 4), New York: Scribner, 2569–2580.

—. 1997, "Art *in* Empire: The Royal Image and the Visual Dimensions of Assyrian Ideology", in: S. Parpola – R.M. Whiting (eds), *Assyria 1995. Proceedings of the 10th Anniversary Symposium of the Neo-Assyrian Text Corpus Project*, Helsinki: The Neo-Assyrian Text Corpus Project, 359–381.

—. 2000, "*Le Palais imaginaire*: scale and meaning in the iconography of Neo-Assyrian cylinder seals", in: C. Uehlinger (ed), *Images as Media. Sources for the Cultural History of the Near East and the Eastern Mediterranean (Ist millennium BCE)*, Orbis Biblicus et Orientalis 175, Fribourg/Göttingen: Universitätsverlag/Vandenhoeck&Ruprecht, 51–87.
—. 2009, "What/when Is a Portrait? Royal Images of the Ancient Near East", *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* 153/3, 254–270.

How Did They Think? Towards Use of Metaphor Theories to Research the Hittite Conceptual World

Marta Pallavidini (Freie Universität Berlin)

This contribution explores the possibility of accessing the Hittites' system of thinking. In particular, it will be shown that by analyzing written sources via conceptual metaphor theory, deliberate metaphor theory, and conceptual blending theory, as well as by applying the metaphor identification procedure in order to identify conceptual metaphors, it is possible to reconstruct a picture of the conceptual world of Hittite culture.

Accessing Their Minds

Every scholar who deals with ancient cultures dreams of finding a way of knowing how these ancient humans thought about fundamental concepts like emotion, desire, morality, society, politics, economy, communication, time, life and death, human relationships, religion, events and actions.[1] Unfortunately, we cannot ask them to explain their conceptual world to us, so it is necessary to find another way of accessing the cognitive level of ancient people.

Being able to describe the system of thinking of ancient humans can, in fact, shed light on long-debated issues (generally different from culture to culture) by looking at them from a different perspective. Furthermore, building a picture of the conceptual world of an ancient culture means gaining deeper knowledge of the language(s) they wrote and spoke, and this will enable scholars to read and interpret textual sources more coherently.

For some ancient cultures like the Greeks and Romans, the work of philosophers has facilitated scholars' access to the system of thinking of these ancient cultures; for other cultures, their conceptual level is almost completely beyond the reach of today's scholars.

This is the case with the Hittites. The Hittite archives are known to consist of more than 30,000 fragments of clay tablets, written in cuneiform in several different languages: Hittite, Akkadian, Luwian, Sumerian, Palaic, Hattic and Hurrian. The exact number of documents remains difficult to ascertain, but what is clear is that none of the texts found

1 On these concepts, see Kövecses 2002, 20–25.

to date can be classified as a treatise that opens a passage to the conceptual world of the Hittites. In the same fashion, the study of written sources from historical, linguistic, philological and anthropological perspectives has enriched our knowledge about the Hittites enormously – their culture, beliefs, society, economic system, political history and cultic practices; yet such approaches to the study of written sources have only hinted sporadically at the question of how the Hittites thought. Thus far, no comprehensive study has been dedicated to this topic in the field of Hittitology, yet I want to point out, using two examples, the importance of being able to build a picture of their conceptual world.

The first example concerns the Hittite term *išḫiul*, which means 'treaty'.[2] As indicated in the etymology, the term is a derivate of the verb *išḫai-/išḫiya-*, which means 'to bind'. It is clear from examples provided by the *Hethitisches Wörterbuch*[2] that in some contexts, the verb has very concrete meanings, while in others, the action of binding is figurative.[3]

An instance of concrete meaning is illustrated by passage KUB 17.12, Rev. III 16–18 of the ritual of Bappi:[4] *nu* GIG-*zi kuin antuḫšan* (17) *n=an PA-NI* ZAG.GAR.RA ^{SÌG}*pittulit* (18) ŠU$^{ḪI.A}$-[*Š*]*U išḫiyanzi* "the man whom the disease seizes, you bind his hands with a rope in front of an altar." In contrast with this vivid and very concrete image, the verb can also assume a figurative meaning. For instance, in CTH 266, instruction for palace personnel, we read the following in the right column, line 15: $^{MUNUŠ.MEŠ}$*wannummiuš* KIN-*an išḫai* "you shall obligate the unmated women to the work." Here, *išḫai* (literally meaning "you shall bind") is rendered a figurative nuance by "you shall obligate." Since the term *išḫiul* is derived from the verb *išḫai-/išḫiya-*, a concrete meaning of 'bond' is expected. Yet, to my knowledge, the word is never attributed this literal meaning. As we can infer from passages translated in the *Hethitisches Wörterbuch*[2],[5] and in the *Hittite Etymological Dictionary*,[6] *išḫiul* is always used with its figurative meaning of "binding; obligation; injunction; statute; treaty."[7] This feature is more than a simple description of the use of Hittite language; it hints at the Hittites' system of thinking.

In fact, it is possible to infer that in their conceptual world, the idea of a juridically enforced connection was expressed via the very concrete concept of a bond.[8]

The second example that I want to present is largely attested not only in Hittite documents but in other ancient Near Eastern sources as well. I refer to use of terms related to the concept of family in order to indicate different relations among kings. This practice is very well established in Hittite documentation, in particular, the exchange of letters between kings.

---

2 "Verpflichtung, Regelung, Vorschrift, Vertrag" (HW², Lfg. 24, 2014, 146).

3 See HW², Lfg. 23–24, 2014, 112–117.

4 CTH 431. For the edition, see S. Görke (ed), hethiter.net/: CTH 431 (INTR 2015–05–27).

5 HW², Lfg. 24, 2014, 146–150.

6 HED, Vol. 2, E–I, 400–401.

7 *Ibid*. The concrete meaning is offered by other terms derived from *išḫai-/išḫiya-*: $^{(TÚG)}$*išḫiyal-* ('bond, band, belt') and $^{(KUŠ)}$*išḫima(n)-* ('string, line, cord, rope, strap') (see HW², Lfg. 24, 2014, 142–146 and HED, Vol. 2, E–I, 399–400).

8 In other cultures, the focus is not on binding obligation but on discussion that ends with agreement, like in lat. *tractatus* (it. *trattato*, eng. *treaty*).

Two kings of equal rank, in fact, called each other "brother."[9] The word "brother" is often employed at the beginning of letters as part of the greeting formula.[10] This appellation is attested in all *corpora* of international correspondence among Hittite kings with equally ranked rulers, i.e., in Hittite-Assyrian, Hittite-Babylonian and Hittite-Egyptian correspondence. In the latter in particular, the appellation is very frequently used,[11] not only because more letters have been found in the Hittite capital than in other *corpora* but also because between Ḫatti and Egypt, the alliance was actually formalized by the issue of a treaty.[12] Among others, in letter KUB 3.22,[13] sent by Ramses II to Ḫattušili, in Obv. 2, the former addresses the latter with the following words: ana ^{m}Ḫattušili LUGAL.GAL L[UGAL KUR Ḫatti] ŠEŠ-ya qibīma ("to Ḫattušili, Great King, K[ing of Ḫatti], my brother, say").

This second example offers not simply a further clue as to what Hittites thought about a specific concept (i.e., international society) but also shows how this conceptualization played a role in political and diplomatic discourse, since the unbalanced relation between Hittite kings and their subordinates was conceptualized using the respective terms "lord" and "servant".

These two examples make it clear that having access to the way the Hittites thought may help us gain more precise and deeper knowledge of the functioning of the language, the structuring of political thought and the making of diplomacy.

The goal should be to have a complete picture of the Hittite conceptual world and to do this, the way these conceptualizations worked needs to be defined. It is also important that a method is designed, facilitating identification of how the concepts were expressed in texts.

An Innovative Theoretical Approach

In general, the process of defining one thing in terms of something else is called metaphor.[14] A metaphor, though, traditionally indicates a linguistic phenomenon[15] while for this research, it is necessary to also include the cognitive process that produces the linguis-

9 On the topic of brotherhood in connection to ancient Near Eastern kings, see Podany 2010.

10 On the different formulations of greetings at the beginning of letters, see Hagenbuchner 1989, 40–55 and Hoffner 2009, 25–29.

11 For attestations in Hittite-Assyrian correspondence, see Mora-Giorgieri 2004, 226; for Hittite-Babylonian correspondence, see Hagenbuchner 1989, 281–302; for Hittite-Egyptian correspondence, see Edel 1994, *passim*.

12 On the possible stipulation of treaties also with Assyria and Babylonia, see Devecchi 2015.

13 Edel 1994, 50–51.

14 See Aristotle, *Poetics,* 1457b, 6–7.

15 See, for instance, the *Oxford English Dictionary* definition, where metaphor is defined as "a figure of speech in which a name or descriptive word or phrase is transferred to an object or action different from, but analogous to, that to which it is literally applicable" (http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/117328?redirectedFrom=metaphor#eid).

tic expression. The theory according to which metaphor pervades our everyday life "not just in language but in thought and action"[16] was developed by G. Lakoff and M. Johnson in the book *Metaphors We Live By* (1980). These phenomena are treated as "conceptual metaphors" and are defined as the mapping between a source domain (generally more concrete) and a target domain (generally more abstract).[17]

To refer to just one typical example of conceptual metaphors, we can quote the sentence "I am feeling up today." In this case, "up" means "good." "Up" is a very intuitive source domain and is used to metaphorize the abstract idea of "good."[18]

The definition fits very well with the examples from written Hittite sources that are considered above. In fact, in the first case, the abstract idea of a legal agreement is conceptualized with the concrete idea of the bond, hence the metaphor A LEGAL AGREEMENT IS A BOND.

In the second example, the source domain is the family; the target domain is the international society, and the conceptual metaphor that originates from mapping the former onto the latter is INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY IS A FAMILY.

The conceptual metaphor theory has one important postulate that must be considered in the study of Hittite documents. In fact, according to Lakoff and Johnson, conceptual metaphors are conventional. In particular, Lakoff and Johnson define as conventional, metaphors that "structure the ordinary conceptual system of our culture, which is reflected in our everyday language."[19]

This postulate holds true, but it deserves further elaboration when related to Hittite texts. The metaphor INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY IS A FAMILY is, in fact, less conventional than expected. Use of this metaphor was widespread throughout the whole Near East before the Hittites, but some documents from the Hittite capital prove that the metaphor was understood as such and its relevance in political discourse was exploited *ad hoc*.

In KUB 3.42+, a letter sent from Ramses to Ḫattušili after the stipulation of the treaty,[20] we read in Obv. 31–32: u ninu k[i ŠEŠ^{MEŠ} ša 1-en abi u ša 1-et ^{MUNUS}AM]A "we are like brothers, from one father and one mother."[21]

16 Lakoff and Johnson 1980, 3.

17 For a list and discussion of the most common source and target domain, see Kövecses 2002, 16–25. Lakoff and Johnson's idea that metaphors are products of our system of thinking was not new and can be traced back to G. Vico (see Danesi 2001; for an overview of other positions close to the cognitive approach, see Arduini and Fabbri 2014, 33–41) and, to some extent, even to Aristotle. More recently, ideas close to conceptual metaphor theory have been proposed by Richards 1936; Black 1962; Ortony 1979. However, it was with publication of *Metaphors we live by* that the idea of metaphors being conceptual in nature became a fully-fledged theory, adding momentum to a long-standing debate.

18 For this and other examples of the same kind, see Lakoff and Johnson 1980, 14–17.

19 Lakoff and Johnson 1980, 139.

20 References to brotherhood in Obv. 20 and 23 suggest that the letter dates from after the stipulation of the treaty, since it ratifies the alliance between the two kings.

21 Edel 1994, 86–87.

A similar expression is also attested in KUB 23.103, a letter belonging to Hittite-Assyrian correspondence.[22] The expression in Obv. 4 is, in fact, [*Š*]*A* 1^{EN} *ABI* AMA *kišdummat* "we have become [(as brothers]) from one father and mother."[23]

In these two letters, the metaphor of brotherhood is explained in very simple terms: to be allies is like being brothers in a literal sense, that is, sons of the same father and mother. The explanation of the metaphor implies, in my opinion, that the metaphor was, in fact, understood as such and was exploited in diplomatic discourse in order to underline not only the equality of rank but also of the good relations between the kings.

This idea is confirmed by letter KUB 23.102.[24] In Obv. II 14–15, the Hittite king asks the question: *zik=za=kán ammuq=a* [*1*]*-edani* [AMA]*-ni ḫaššanteš* "have you and I been born from one mother?"[25] Unlike the previous two expressions, in this text, the metaphor is exploited not to stress the existence of an alliance but, on the contrary, to deny it by using a rhetorical question about actual brotherhood.

All three cases show that the concept of brotherhood was understood as a metaphor, so it is possible to define this conceptual metaphor as deliberate. According to the deliberate metaphor theory developed by G. Steen, a metaphor is deliberate when the addressees "must pay attention to the source domain as an independent conceptual domain (...) that they are instructed to use to think about the target of the metaphor."[26]

A further postulate of the conceptual metaphor theory is that being a cognitive phenomenon, metaphor is not to be considered a figure of speech (something present only in literary texts and rhetoric) but rather something that could potentially arise in any linguistic source.

Yet, in the analysis of literary texts, it is necessary to distinguish between conventional, everyday metaphors and the metaphorical images that are (in the words of Aristotle) "the hallmark of the genius."[27]

G. Lakoff and M. Turner have dedicated a specific work to this topic. In *More than Cool Reason*, they explain that "it is a prerequisite to any discussion of metaphor that we make a distinction between basic conceptual metaphors, which are cognitive in nature, and particular linguistic expressions of these conceptual metaphors."[28] It follows that metaphors in literary texts are not unconventional as conceptual metaphor but rather in their linguistic expression.

22 The letter was sent by the Hittite king to the Assyrian, but the identities of the sender and recipient are still debated. On this debate, see Mora and Giorgieri 2004, 156–157.

23 The most recent edition of the letter is in Mora and Giorgieri 2004, 159–162.

24 The message belongs to Hittite-Assyrian correspondence, but the sender and recipient cannot be identified with certainty. Cf. Mora and Giorgieri 2004, 184–187.

25 Mora and Giorgieri 2004, 187–190.

26 See Steen 2011, in particular p. 84.

27 Aristotle, *Poetics*, 1459a, 6–8.

28 Lakoff and Turner 1987, 50.

In particular, according to Lakoff and Turner, the unconventionality of (many) metaphors in literature is generated by four different mechanisms facilitating expression of conceptual metaphors in language: extending, elaborating, questioning and composing.[29]

One interesting example of the use of the elaboration mechanism is offered by the tale of Appu (CTH 360).[30] At the very beginning of the text, we read [... *ḫ*]*an*[*dand*]*uš* LÚ.MEŠ-*uš kuiš šar*[*l*]*iškezzi ḫuwappaš*[*=a=k*]*an* LÚ.MEŠ-*uš* GIŠ-*ru mān lilakki* / "[you are the one][31] who exalts the righteous men, who cuts down the evil men like a tree" (CTH 360, Obv. I 2–3).

In this passage, two conceptual metaphors can be detected: RIGHTEOUSNESS IS UP and RUIN IS A FALL. Both metaphors are conventional, but their linguistic expressions differ substantially. In the first case, in fact, the metaphor is expressed simply by the verb *šarlai-*, which means 'to exalt; praise; let prevail'.[32] The second metaphor is expressed in more elaborate language. The idea of the defeat of evil men is expressed as a fall, yet the fall is conceptualized as the consequence of cutting down a tree. According to Haas, the image of someone cutting down evil men like trees is "ohne literarische Parallele", but the motive is attested in the glyptic.[33] It is, therefore, possible to argue that elaboration of the metaphor RUIN IS A FALL in the tale of Appu suggests that the text might be a literary work. Since the definition of Hittite literature is still debated, the presence of such metaphors hints at a more precise classification of documents that not are not unanimously considered to be literature.[34]

As shown by the example of the tale of Appu, in some cases, conceptual metaphors are not always easy to identify or explain. In these cases, conceptual metaphor theory might not be the most suitable theory for understanding metaphorical expressions.

In text CTH 325[35] (the myth of the disappearance and return of the Stormgod), lines 10–11 of Rev. III state ^{D}IM-*naš kartimmiya*[*uwanza* ZI-*ŠU* NÍ.TE- *ŠU u*]*riwaran paḫḫur* "the soul and the body of the irate Stormgod (are) burning fire."[36]

In this case, the most suitable theory is the conceptual blending theory developed by G. Fauconnier and M. Turner, published in *The Way We Think. Conceptual Blending and the Mind's Hidden Complexities* (2002).

According to this theory, a metaphor is not generated by a process of mapping between two domains, but rather, it involves four different spaces: two input mental spaces, a ge-

29 For an example of the four mechanisms, see Lakoff and Turner 1987, 67–72.

30 Edition: E. Rieken et al. (ed), hethiter.net/: CTH 360.1 (TX 2009–08–31, TRde 2009–08–31).

31 According to Haas 2006, 195, the agent is Istanu, while the online edition does not reconstruct the subject.

32 CHD, Š/2, 273–274.

33 Haas 2006, p. 195.

34 The debate on the concept of literature in relation to the Hittite texts is immense and goes far beyond the limits of this contribution. See, recently, Haas 2006, 16–17 with reference to previous literature.

35 Edition: E. Rieken et al. (ed), hethiter.net/: CTH 325 (TX 2012–05–06, TRde 2012–05–06).

36 For a slighty different translation, see Torri 2003, 68.

neric space and a blended space. The mental input spaces are "small conceptual packets",[37] and in the case of the example from Hittite texts, they are "anger" and "fire", respectively. The generic space is connected with both input spaces, since it contains the common elements of the two input spaces. In the case of CTH 325, Rev. III 10–11, the generic space contains, for instance, the idea of "heat", common to both input spaces "anger" and "fire." The fourth and final space, the blend, combines the connections among the other spaces, and the metaphor is generated in this space. In the passage CTH 325, the metaphor emerging from the blend is ANGER IS FIRE.

A Well-established Methodology

Conceptual metaphor theory, deliberate metaphor theory and conceptual blending theory do not contradict one another,[38] since they all presuppose that metaphor is first and foremost a cognitive phenomenon which is subsequently expressed in language.

Since linguistic expression is the starting point for a study of conceptual metaphor in Hittite texts, it is necessary to process these sources according to a method designed for this purpose. The following method (metaphor identification procedure) was developed by the Pragglejaz group in 2007 and consists of three different phases:[39]

1. Read the entire textual discourse to establish a general understanding of the meaning.
2. Determine the lexical units in the textual discourse.
3. a. For each lexical unit[40] in the text, establish its meaning in context, that is, how it applies to an entity, relation or attribute in the situation evoked by the text (contextual meaning). Take into account what comes before and after the lexical unit.
   b. For each lexical unit, determine whether it has a more basic contemporary meaning in contexts other than the one in question. (Basic meanings tend to be more concrete, related to bodily action, more precise and historically older, but they are not necessarily the most frequent meanings of the lexical unit.)
   c. If the lexical unit has a more basic current-contemporary meaning in contexts other than the one in question, decide whether the contextual meaning is different from the basic meaning but can be understood in comparison with it.
4. If yes, mark the lexical unit as metaphorical.

It is clear that some implications of this procedure do not apply to ancient texts. For instance, in the case of our textual corpus, the concepts of "historically older" and "cur-

37 Fauconnier and Turner 2002, 40.
38 On the integration between conceptual metaphor theory and conceptual blending theory, see, in particular, Mark Turner's blog http://markturner.org/blendaphor.html.
39 Pragglejaz Group 2007; Semino 2008, 11–12.
40 A lexical unit can be a single word or a more complex phrase. See Semino 2008, 12–13.

rent-contemporary meaning" are not easy to determine.[41] Since the metaphor identification procedure (as stated by the Pragglejaz Group)[42] may be modified in relation to different parameters like discourse, genre and the modality of metaphor expression, it is possible to use a simplified procedure which is more fitting for the needs of a study based on ancient languages.

The procedure is simplified in phases 3b. and 3c. Notably, in phase 3b., it will be determined whether every lexical unit has a basic concrete and precise meaning in other texts or contexts. In phase 4c., the correlation between basic and other meanings will be discussed.

Treaties written in the Hittite language often use the expression *MĀMĪTU šarra/i-*, which is translated as "to break the oath." Since the verb *šarra/i-* means 'to divide; to cut off',[43] this lexical unit must be processed in order to establish whether it can be considered metaphorical. The context in the treaties repeatedly refers to some action on the part of the subordinate king, through which he violates the regulations of the treaty (such as a lack of military intervention in support of the Hittite king or harboring fugitives). The decisive question in order to classify the expression as metaphorical is whether the verb *šarra/i-* has concrete meaning(s). According to the examples referred to in the *Chicago Hittite Dictionary*, the verb has a literal meaning. In texts KBo 20.14, Rev. IV 20–-24, we read NINDA=*ya=kan IŠTU* È ^{D}*Māliya=pat ANA* ^{GIŠ}BANŠUR$^{ḪI.A}$=*ŠUNU=šan* ^{È}*karimni ḫantī šarranzi* "And the bread from the same temple of Maliya they divide up individually temple by temple for their tables."[44] Since the meaning cannot be literal in the unit *MĀMĪTU šarra/i-* being analyzed, it follows that the expression is metaphorical. In particular, we have the metaphor OATH IS A BREAKABLE OBJECT.

A New Research Path

To conclude, this contribution aims to show how processing written Hittite sources in accordance with conceptual metaphor theory, and also (at least in certain cases) deliberate metaphor theory and conceptual blending theory, can facilitate access to the Hittite system of thinking. A systematic study from this perspective can be conducted by analyzing documents in the search for conceptual metaphors thanks to the metaphor identification procedure, a rigorous method specifically developed for this kind of search.

The examples referred to in this paper prove that extensive study can achieve several goals: deepening our general knowledge of specific debated topics, for instance, diplomacy and policymaking; better definition of Hittite textual genres (in particular, those

41 It is possible that historically older meanings of lexical units will be found, but this will be the case for a small minority of exceptions, so it cannot be a general criterion for the identification of metaphors.

42 Pragglejaz Group 2007, specifically 23.

43 See CHD/Š-2, 230–238.

44 See CHD/Š-2, 232.

documents that can be subsumed under the definition of literature); and finally, improving our knowledge of the Hittite language and thus also improving our translations by making them more coherent and precise.

Of course, some challenges have to be faced, such as the fact that Hittite documents are written in several different languages, some of which remain poorly understood (like Hurrian and Hattian, for instance). Dating of the texts remains, in several cases, a matter of debate, thus restricting the possibility of building a picture of changes in metaphors over the time span of the Hittite archives. Furthermore, documents or genres are themselves difficult to interpret, meaning that identification of conceptual metaphors might also be tricky.

Nonetheless, as a methodological synthesis with examples and previously published contributions on diplomatic and historiographic documents,[45] this contribution has shown that this new path of research is worth pursuing. In fact, identification and interpretation of conceptual metaphors in Hittite texts will give us access, for the first time, to the system of thinking of an ancient culture.

Bibliography

Arduini, S. – Fabbri, R. 2014, *Che cos'è la linguistica cognitiva?,* Roma: Carocci.

Black, M. 1962, *Models and Metaphors*, Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

Danesi, M. 2001, *Metafora, lingua, concetto. Vico e la linguistica cognitiva*, Bari: Edizioni del Sud.

Devecchi, E. 2015, *Trattati internazionali ittiti*, Brescia: Paideia.

Edel, E. 1994, *Die ägyptisch-hethitische Korrespondenz aus Boghazköi in babylonischer und hethitischer Sprache*, Abhandlungen der Rheinisch-Westfälischen Akademie der Wissenschaften 77, Opladen: Westdt. Verlag.

Fauconnier, G. – Turner, M. 2002, *The Way We Think. Conceptual Blending and the Mind's Hidden Complexities*, New York: Basic.

Haas, V. 2006, *Die hethitische Literatur*, Berlin/New York: de Gruyter.

Hagenbuchner, A. 1989, *Die Korrespondenz der Hethiter 1. Die Briefe unter ihren kulturellen, sprachlichen und thematischen Gesichtspunkten 2. Die Briefe mit Transkription, Übersetzung und Kommentar*, Texte der Hethiter 15–16, Heidelberg: Winter.

Hoffner, H.A. 2009, *Letters from the Hittite Kingdom*, Atlanta: SBL Press.

Kövecses, Z. 2002, *Metaphor. A Practical Introduction*, New York: Oxford University Press.

Lakoff, G. – Johnson, M. 1980, *Metaphors We Live By*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Lakoff, G. – Turner, M. 1987, *More than Cool Reason. A Field Guide to Poetic Metaphor*, Chicago/London: University of Chicago Press.

45 See Pallavidini 2017 and 2018.

Mora, C. – Giorgieri, M. 2004, *Le Lettere Tra I Re Ittiti e I Re Assiri Ritrovate a Hattusa*, Padova: Sargon.
Ortony, A. 1979, *Metaphor and Thought*, New York: Cambridge University Press.
Pallavidini, M. 2017, "On Some Expressions Describing the Relation Between the Hittite King and His Vassals in the Hittite Subjugation Treaties: A Cognitive Approach", *News from the Land of the Hittites* 1, 91–100.
2018, "On the Diplomatic Function of Some Metaphorical Expressions Related to the Semantic Field of Sight in the Hittite International Treaties", *Res Antiquae* 15, 1–12.
Podany, A.H. 2010, *Brotherhood of Kings. How International Relations Shaped the Ancient Near East*, Oxford/New York: Oxford University Press.
Pragglejaz Group 2007, "MIP: A Method for Identifying Metaphorically Used Words in Discourse", *Metaphor and Symbol*, 22/1, 1–39
Richards, I.A. 1936, *The Philosophy of Rhethoric*, New York/London: Oxford University Press.
Semino, E. 2008, *Metaphor in Discourse*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Steen, G. 2011, "From three dimensions to five steps: The value of deliberate metaphor", *metaphorik.de* 21, 83–110.
Torri, G. 2003, *La similitudine nella magia analogica ittita*, Studia Asiana 2, Roma: Herder.

Cows of Battle, Urinating Lions, and Frightened Falcons: On Metaphor in Sumerian Literary Compositions*

Judith Pfitzner (Universität Wien)

Metaphorical expressions, or metaphors appear in abundance in Sumerian literary compositions.[1] They are, however, still occasionally described as fanciful, odd, or exotic.[2] In this essay, the author presents five metaphors taken from Sumerian compositions that, on the surface, appear to be rather unusual.

Introduction

When working with Sumerian literary compositions from the Old Babylonian period, the compositions' richness of metaphors[3] is particularly intriguing. Metaphors, here, are taken in the broadest sense. They include a variety of nominal forms, which may or may not be specifically marked as metaphorical, but whose context defines them so. They also include grammatic forms using the enclitic copula of the third person singular (–am$_3$)

* The present paper stems from research undertaken in the context of the project "Bestiarium Mesopotamicum:animal omens in Ancient Mesopotamia." The project has received funding from the Austrian Science Fund (FWF des Wissenschaftsfonds; Project no. P 31032). The author would like to thank Marta Pallavidini and Ludovico Portuese for organizing the workshop "Researching Metaphor in the Ancient Near East: Perspectives from Texts and Images" and for the opportunity to present her research. Thanks further go to Nicole Lundeen-Kaulfus and to James Watson for correcting the author's English, and to Nicla de Zorzi, Jerrold Cooper, and Krisztián Simko for commenting on an earlier version of this paper. All remaining errors or inconsistencies must be credited to the author.

1 The term "literary composition" is a modern one. For a recent discussion of Sumerian literature, its nature and boundaries, see, for instance, Rubio 2009, 22–28.

2 The most obvious example for this notion was given by Jaques 2011, 3–4 (with reference to Landsberger and Falkenstein) and Jaques 2015, 322–323. Further, although Black does not explicitely state this, a similar notion can be interpreted from his monograph on *Reading Sumerian Poetry* (Black 1998, 9–19, especially 10 and 18); see also Black 1996, 23; Feldt 2007, 185, fn. 2.

3 "(...) there is something striking about the use of imagery especially in Sumerian literature" (Feldt 2007, 187–188).

and those using the equative morpheme (–gen$_7$),[4] as well as other constructions.[5] But, it is important to note that none of these constructions are restricted to a figurative use.

Metaphors, stressing ambiguities as well as similarities, are used in Sumerian literary compositions, for instance, to create tension, to illustrate situations,[6] and to evoke emotions (such as fear,[7] pride,[8] or pity[9]). This qualities make metaphor in Sumerian a rewarding subject of research.

Metaphors in other languages, especially in languages no longer spoken, present a number of interpretative difficulties such as differentiating between figurative and non-figurative language[10] and between dead and live metaphors.[11] Added to this is the problem of translating metaphors from one language to another.[12] The grammatical peculiarites of the Sumerian equative morpheme, hamper any work with metaphors in Sumerian literary compositions: a noun or noun phrase marked by the equative morpheme is not always the subject or the object of a clause.[13] It may stand in a dimensional case, that as such is not marked by an additional grammatical morpheme on the noun or noun phrase, but that

4 Usually termed "similes". In Sumerian, however, similes cannot in all instances be strictly separated from metaphors for purely grammatical reasons: The enclitic copula third person singular (–am$_3$) was occasionally used in contexts where one would expect an equative morpheme; the equative marker (–gen$_7$) sometimes alternates with the enclitic copula (–am$_3$) in parallel phrases; and a few instances exist where, in figurative contexts, earlier manuscripts of a line include the enclitic copula, while later manuscripts give the equative morpheme instead. See on this phenomenon (though not all share the same view of how to deal with it) Heimpel 1968, 33–36; Thomsen 1984, 109, 276; Black 1998, 15–16; Streck 1998, 38–39, fn 16; Veldhuis 2004, 53, fn. 21; Feldt 2007, 188; Attinger 2009, 131; Jagersma 2010, 692; Zólyomi 2017, 116–117.

5 Other constructions that can indicate the figurative use of a noun or noun phrase, are: nouns in the adverbiative (on this – not undisputed – case, see Attinger 1993, 260 and now Meyer-Laurin 2012, 216, fn. 2); constructions with the modal adverb i-gi$_4$-in-zu (see Wilcke 1968, 238; Black 1995; Krebernik and Streck 2001, 68; Kaneva 2007; Wilcke 2010, 27); and, in specific cases, negative conditional clauses with nu-me-a (see recently Delnero 2018, 308).

6 See the description of the final clash between Ninurta and Asag in Ninurta's Exploits, ETCSL 1.6.2, lines 288–297, further the description of Agade's downfall in Curse on Agade, ETCSL 2.2.1, lines 77–82. The ETCSL numbers of the respective compositions are given for practical purposes.

7 See the description of the demon Asag in Ninurta's Exploits, ETCSL 1.6.2, lines 173–175, in terms of a (collapsing) brick wall, a storm, and a roaring saĝkal-snake (on metaphors in this composition generally, see Feldt 2011).

8 See the words of praise in Ninurta's Exploits, ETCSL 1.6.2, lines 373–375.

9 See the description of the lamenting goddess in Lament for Urim, ETCSL 2.2.2, lines 102–104, in terms of a cow whose calf has been taken away.

10 See, for instance, Streck who stressed the importance of differentiating between metaphor and mythology (Streck 1999, 52–53). This differentiation is not always easy and, in some cases, impossible to make.

11 On this distinction, see Black 1998, 57 (reffering to Wellek and Warren 1972), who suggests as follows: "(...) that images which occur in pairs or clearly defined clusters are more likely to have a vivid, literary significance than those which occur singly and about which there is some uncertainty."

12 See, for instance, Samaniego Fernández, Velasco Sacristán and Fuertes Olivera,2005.

13 Though, according to Jagersma 2010, 204, the "compared item" (i.e. the tenor) is in most cases the subject or object of the clause.

must be reconstructed[14] to avoid misleading translations. (Example: It makes a semantic difference, whether kiš^{ki} gud an-na-gen$_7$ im-ug$_5$[15] is translated as "(Enlil's frowning)[16] killed the city Kiš like the Bull of Heaven (would have killed the city)", "(Enlil's frowning) killed Kiš like (it would have killed) the Bull of Heaven", or rather "(Enlil's frowning) killed Kiš as through the Bull of Heaven"). Further, the equative marker occasionally follows the first noun, while the metaphor comprises the whole phrase.[17] It appears to the author that these important details were not always considered during translation.

In spite of these difficulties, interest in the study of metaphor in Sumerian compositions has increased over the last 20 years,[18] and, as a result, many formulations are now better understood.[19] However, still some metaphors continue to defy simple explanation. These metaphors appear to be misplaced; the set of implications associated with the vehicle do not make sense when applied to the tenor;[20] or, occasionally, the whole phrase as such appears to be incomprehensible. Some of these metaphors will be presented in the following section,[21] and alternative interpretations will be proposed.[22] It will be argued

14 Heimpel (1968, 27–28) observed this some 50 years ago and named it a "virtual" dimensional case. Jagersma's (2010, 204) grammar briefly mentions this phenomenon as does Sövegjártó's (2010, 1000) discussion of the equative case.

15 Curse on Agade, ETCSL 2.2.1, line 2. See Feldt 2007.

16 saĝ-ki gid$_2$-da ^{d}en-lil$_2$-la$_2$-ke$_4$ (Curse on Agade, ETCSL 2.2.1, line 1).

17 See Heimpel 1968, 36–40, especially 37–38; Wilcke 1976, 210 for examples.

18 While Kramer 1969 gave an overview of metaphors and similes in Sumerian compositions, there are two important monographs explicitely dealing with the topic: Heimpel 1968 and Black 1998. To name some more contributions: Wilcke 1976, 210–212; Berlin 1979, 29; Edzard 1987; Lambert 1987; Wilcke 1987; Black 1996; Sefati 1998; Watanabe 2002; Veldhuis 2004, 52–53; Feldt 2007; Muntingh 2007; Ponchia 2009; Foster 2010; Jaques 2011; Selz 2011: 51–52; Mittermayer 2012; Wilcke 2012b; Jaques 2015, 191–199 and 322–324; Böck 2014, 115–128; Gabbay 2014, 29–33; Pfitzner 2018; Pfitzner 2019; Selz forthcoming. Approaches that apply the Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT) to the Sumerian material, as, for instance, Böck 2014 did, appear especially interesting to the author.

19 See, for instance, line 258 of Enki and the World Order, ETCSL 1.1.3 (^{id2}idigna am gal-gen$_7$ šag$_4$ im-hul$_2$ u$_3$-tud-ba mu-ni-[...]); Mittermayer 2012, 246 translated the noun phrase in equative "wie *durch* einen großen Wildstier war der Tigris erfreut" [italics hers] and Wilcke 2012b "wie durch einen großen Wildstier beglückt." The latter translation clarifies the line's sexual connotations.

20 The terminology used in the present paper is that of Richards 1936, Black 1962, and others, and the so-called Interaction Theory of Metaphor (for an overview of this theory of metaphor and other approaches, see Rolf 2005). This theoretical approach describes metaphors primarily as the result of a semantic tension between the metaphoric expression and its context on the one hand, and between tenor and vehicle on the other hand. Richards' terms "tenor" and "vehicle" (Richards 1936, 64; note, however, that Richards himself used these terms inconsistently, as criticized, for instance, by Black 1983, 77–78, fn 23; see Kittay 1987, 22–23) are preferred by the present author over Black's "principal subject" and "subsidiary subject" (Black 1983, 75–76; later he changed these designations to "primary subject" and "secondary subject", see Black 1983a, 392) merely out of practical considerations: they are simpler to differentiate.

21 The case studies were taken from the author's forthcoming dissertation on metaphor (in the broadest sense, see above) in Sumerian narratives (Pfitzner forthcoming).

22 It goes without saying that a certain degree of speculation is unavoidable in the interpretation of Sumerian metaphors.

that in some cases, translations of Sumerian metaphors appearing odd were not caused by the fact that Sumerian metaphors are as such difficult to understand or to translate, but by other, more prosaic reasons.

Case Studies

The Frightened Falcon: Misleading Interpretation of Signs (Modern)

The transliteration of line 36 of the composition Dumuzid and Ĝeštinana, ETCSL 1.4.1.1, describing Dumuzid trying to escape from the demons who want to take him to the netherworld, has long troubled Assyriologists:

^{d}dumu-zid-de$_{3}$ mušen-še$_{3}$ sur$_{2}$-du$_{3}^{mušen}$ dal-a-gen$_{7}$ zi-ni ur$_{5}$-da i$_{3}$-šub-ba

Falkenstein[23] first proposed this transliteration in 1965 and most scholars adopted it;[24] here are some of the translations:

- Falkenstein: "Dumuzi ...te seine 'Seele', wie ein (schnell) fliegender Falke auf einen (kleinen) Vogel (stösst)."[25]
- Heimpel: "Dumuzid (...), als er wie ein nach einem Vogel auffliegender Falke sein 'Leben', das aus dem Koerper gefallen war, gepackt hatte."[26]
- Sladek: "Dumuzi, as a bird, like the soaring falcon that can swoop down alive."[27]
- Römer – Edzard: "Dumuzi brachte wie (vor) einem auf einen Vogel (stoßenden schnell) fliegenden Falken sein Leben, *das, was (fast) aus den Lungen gefallen war*."[28]
- Black: "Dumuzi, like a flying falcon after a bird, attentively swooping."[29]
- ETCSL: (Dumuzid,) "like a soaring falcon that can swoop down on a live (?) bird."[30]

Most scholars understood sur$_{2}$-du$_{3}^{mušen}$ 'falcon' as somehow flying after a bird (mušen-še$_{3}$), and as the vehicle (i.e. the expression used metaphorically) for Dumuzid, with a specific speed being the *tertium comparationis*. However, the translations appear unsatisfactory; the terms mušen-še$_{3}$ and sur$_{2}$-du$_{3}^{mušen}$ dal-a-gen$_{7}$ appear to be in the wrong order; and the description of the scared, fleeing Dumuzid with the vehicle sur$_{2}$-du$_{3}^{mušen}$ 'falcon' is at odds

23 Falkenstein 1965, 281.
24 Except for Gadd and Kramer 1963, 3 (description of the tablet) and Jacobsen 1987, 228. Note, however, Kramer's paraphrase of the line in question a few years later: "the soul flies from Dumuzi's body, 'like a falcon flying against a(nother) bird'" (Kramer 1969, 7).
25 Falkenstein 1965, 281.
26 Heimpel 1968, 422–423.
27 Sladek 1974, 233.
28 Römer and Edzard 1993, 490.
29 Black 1996, 31.
30 ETCSL (download: 21.01.2020).

with the context of the scene as well as with the common usage of the term sur$_2$-du$_3^{mušen}$, a bird of prey and a hunter (used, for instance, as vehicle for Inana[31]).[32]

The author suggests that the incorrect reading of one sign lies at the core of these uncertainties:[33] the sign following mušen is not ŠE$_3$, but the quite similar sign ŠU, meaning 'hand; talon'.[34] With the new reading the metaphor becomes clear: on the one hand, there is the (strong, dangerous) bird of prey, the hunter sur$_2$-du$_3^{mušen}$, on the other hand, there is the (weak, scared) bird, the refugee, the hunted Dumuzid. The author therefore translates this passage as:

> 35. muš-saĝ-kal-gen$_7$ šag$_4$-tum$_2$ ḫur-saĝ-ĝa$_2$ mu-ni-in-bal-bal
> 36. ^{d}dumu-zid-de$_3$ mušen šu sur$_2$-du$_3^{mušen}$ dal-a-gen$_7$ zi-ni ur$_5$-da i$_3$-šub-ba
> 37. ki ^{d}ĝeštin-an-na-še$_3$ zi-ni ba-ši-in-de$_6$
> Like a saĝkal-snake, (which is) winding in meadows and hills,[35]
> did Dumuzid – like a bird that fled (literally: flew) (from) a falcon's talons – to save his life in this way (?),
> rescue himself (literally: bring his life) to the place of Ĝeštinana.

The Cow of Battle: Misleading Translation (Ancient)[36]

In the manuscript K. 38 of Ninurta's Return to Nibru, ETCSL 1.6.1, in the context of Ninurta enumerating and boasting about his weapons, an apparently unique metaphorical expression is used:[37]

---

31 See Black 1996, 32; Pfitzner 2017.

32 A falcon is, rarely, described as being hunted, see, for instance, line 73 of Enmerkara and Ensukukešdana, ETCSL 1.8.2.4: Enmerkara is described there as follows: sur$_2$-[du$_3$]^{mušen} an-na dal-e-da-bi gu mušen-na-bi-[im] "when the falcons fly on the sky, he is their bird net" (transliteration following Wilcke 2012a). This statement underlines Enmerkara's power: He is so powerful that he even catches falcons flying in the sky; he is dangerous even for these birds (conventionally the hunters par excellence).

33 Pfitzner 2017. On this line, see also Attinger 2017. However, the metaphor is clear.

34 Collated from photograph. The author cordially thanks Anna Pintér (who is currently preparing a new edition of the composition Dumuzid and Ĝeštinana) for sending photos of the respective manuscripts (e-mail from 04.04.2019). Ludwig (2009, 27) also correctly identified the sign, remarking on the respective sign "ŠÈ! wie ŠU".

35 While it is in this case theoretically possible to understand šag$_4$-tum$_2$ ḫur-saĝ-ĝa$_2$ mu-ni-in-bal-bal as separate from the metaphor and therefore not the vehicle muš-saĝ-kal, but the tenor Dumuzid being the one who winds in meadows and hills, the author sees no possibility to translate the parallel lines 31–32 (Dumuzid's prayer to Utu) this way. On the phenomenon in Sumerian that the equative marker follows the first noun, while the metaphor comprises the whole phrase, see already Heimpel 1968, 36–40.

36 Admittedly, this case study does not fully correspond to the others, as it is taken from a late (neo-Assyrian) manuscript. As it is, however, illustrative of what could go wrong even in antiquity, it has been nevertheless included.

37 Cooper 1978, 78 (see also *ibid.*, 40–46, where he collected it together with other "errors" or lexical variants in the transmission of the composition); Attinger and Glenn 2017, 32–33. The Old Baby-

136. šilam me$_3$-a ki-bal-a ^{sa}al-ḫab-ba-ĝu$_{10}$ mu-<e-da-ĝal$_2$-la-am$_3$>[38]
lit-ti ta-ḫa-zi al-lu-ḫap-pu KUR *nu-kur$_2$-tim* MIN
Sum.: The 'cow of battle' of/in the rebellious land, my *alluḫappu*-net, I < carry with me >.
Akk.: The 'cow of battle', the *alluḫappu*-net of the rebellious land, ditto.

The term šilam me$_3$-a 'cow of battle'[39] is semantically difficult, as Sumerian literary compositions didn't usually describe female bovines as being aggressive or dangerous.[40] Cows were rather associated with love, empathy, and maternal feelings.[41] It is therefore implausible that Ninurta's weapon was described by the vehicle "cow of battle."

As Black already suggested, it appears that the reason for this unexpected metaphor is in the lexicon.[42] There is a battle net testified lexically,[43] whose Akkadian translation *littû* is nearly a homophone with the Akkadian term *littu* 'cow'.[44] Most likely, an antique conflation of *littu* and *littû* occurred. Perhaps some broken or damaged manuscripts created problems, and a scribe, not aware of the battle-net *littû*, took *lit-ti* as the more common

lonian recension gives ^{sa}al-kad$_4$, the Middle Babylonian recension ^{sa}al-ḫub$_2$; in the late (bilingual) recension, this line is only extant in one manuscript (K 4852, the other manuscript given by Cooper 1978 for this line, contains the end of the line). The Sumerian in this line generally appears corrupt after the Old Babylonian period (see Cooper 1978, 125). The line in question was collated from the CDLI photo (P393724) of the manuscript K. 38 (obv., line 17').

38 The full verbal form is reconstructed from line 131 of manuscript e (K. 38). It is further, with slight variation, given in line 136 of the Old Babylonian recension.

39 Cooper 1978, 79.

40 Except for the female wild cow sumun$_2$. See, for instance, Lament for Unug, ETCSL 2.2.5, line 5.17–5.18 (edition: Green 1984; manuscript: N 1399, copy *loc. cit.*, 264, collated from the photo on CDLI, P276544), where it is possibly described (parallel to am 'wild bull') as game animal (although the reconstruction of the sign as sumun$_2$ is uncertain): am gal-gen$_7$ ti mu-ni-in-gid$_2$-gid$_2$-i-e[š$^?$ ...] / sumun$_2^?$-gen$_7$ ^{ĝiš}šukur mi-ni-in-te-te ˹x˺ (x possibly ĝe$_{26}$? see manuscript S in Green 1984, 264) [...] "Like to a big wild bull, they (?) caused arrows to approach it (= the city) [...] like to a big wild cow$^?$, they (?) caused lances to come close to it (= the city) [...]."
Another example of sumun$_2$ as a vehicle is given in Enmerkara and the Lord of Arata, ETCSL 1.8.2.3, l. 297, describing the speed of the messenger or a specific way of moving: sumun$_2$-gen$_7$ haš$_2$-a na-mu-un-gur "he turned around on the tights like a wild cow" (on the interpretation of NA as belonging to mu-un-gur rather than to ḫaš-a because of the verbal form na$^?$-mu-un-DU in line 298, see Mittermayer 2008, 259). In Akkadian contexts, the wild cow (*rīmtu*) is more often described as dangerous (for examples, see CAD s.v. *rīmtu*).

41 Pfitzner 2019, 149–150.

42 Black 1980, 158.

43 Ura VI, line 183b (Landsberger 1958: 69); Ur$_5$ – gud I, recension A, line 88 (Landsberger 1958, 76). For further attestations, see CAD s.v. *littû*. Landsberger derived the term *littû* from the Sumerian lam (or *lem)-du$_3$. Its lexical equivalent is ^{sa}ellaĝ-du$_3$ (loc. cit.: 69; collated from the photo in the British Museum database, K. 4161+). Admittedly, it remains difficult to explain why none of Ninurta's Return to Nibru's monolingual manuscripts include the lexeme ^{sa}ellaĝ-du$_3$ in line 136.

44 Black 1980, 158.

term *littu* 'cow'. This would eventually laed to the ancient restoration and re-translation[45] of šilam. It may have also been the cause of the addition of me$_3$-a/*ta-ḫa-zi*, to make the term appear less out of place in this context.

Sleep, the Destroyed Brick Wall (1): Misleading Translation (Modern)

In this case study, the author will discuss a passage from the composition Lugalbanda I, ETCSL 1.8.2.1, lines 318–323.[46] Lugalbanda, who is lost in the wilderness, lays down to sleep, aiming for an ominous dream. Sleep is described as follows:[47]

318. lugal-ra u$_3$-sa$_2$-ge sa$_2$ nam-ga-mu-ni-ib-dug$_4$
319. u$_3$-sa$_2$-ge kur nam-gu$_2$-ga-ke$_4$
320. ku-kur sukud[48] dim$_2$-ma[49] šu e$_2$-ĝar$_8$-gen$_7$ gul-la
321. šu-bi sukud-am$_3$ ĝiri$_3$-bi sukud-am$_3$
322. niĝ$_2$ igi-bi-ta lal$_3$ šu$_2$-šu$_2$-e
323. igi-bi-ta lal$_3$ dirig-dirig-ga-e

45 On the re-translation of Akkadian into Sumerian in the composition Ninurta's Exploits, see Seminara 2001.

46 The author already discussed the structure and contents of lines 318–323 of Lugalbanda I in Pfitzner 2018. Discussion here supplements and partially modifies the arguments there.

47 Note the intertextual link between line 319 and the composition Gilgameš and Ḫuwawa B, ETCSL 1.8.1.5.1, line 11, where kur nam-gu$_2$-ga is used as an epithet for the grave or the Netherworld, or both (see Edzard 1993, 17: "Daß das Grab, der 'Berg', der Gewalt ausübt, niemanden verschonen wird"). The term is a possible euphemism for death (Civil 2013, 38) On sleep in Mesopotamia, see Steinert 2010.

48 The sign is in this line (and in the following line) usually read galam. However, the reading sukud is a better semantic fit. It also reflects other occurrences of this sign in combination with the verb dim$_2$, where a reading sukud is obligatory; e.g., Gilgameš and Ḫuwawa A, ETCSL 1.8.1.5, line 157 (transliteration in Delnero 2006, 2465; line 170 in ETCSL): sukud-ra$_2$ dim$_2$-ma nu-tuku; Letter from Inim-Enlila to a King, ETCSL 3.3.27, A line 3: alan sukud-da dim$_2$-ma ad gi$_4$-gi$_4$ in-tuku (transliteration taken from ETCSL).

49 Against ETCSL and Pfitzner 2018, Hallo's drawing clearly gives the sign sequence GALAM GIM MA (see Hallo 1983, 169). Hallo 1983, 173 interpreted this sign sequence as galam-gim-ma, while ETCSL assumed that the sequence of GIM and MA should be transposed to read galam-ma-gen$_7$. However, there is reason to read sukud instead of galam, the latter solution can thus be excluded. The interpretation chosen here was to read the sign GIM as dim$_2$. This interpretation also fits best the overall structur of line 320 (both containing an infinite verbal form with /-a/).

So far, the following translations have been suggested for line 320:

- Vanstiphout: "it is a towering flood, like the hand that demolishes a brick wall."[50]
- Wilcke: "eine sich kunstvoll auftürmende Welle, die den Verstand umgeworfen hat wie eine Hand eine Mauer."[51]
- ETCSL: "it is like a towering flood, like a hand demolishing a brick wall."[52]
- Hallo: "it is like an extensive flood, a hand destroyed like a brick wall."[53]
- Black: "it is like a towering flood, a hand like a brick wall knocked over."[54]
- Vanstiphout: "it is a raging flood which sweeps over the body as a wall washed away (by water)."[55]

In these translations, either a "hand that has destroyed a brick wall" or a "brick wall that has been destroyed" were taken as vehicles. Both interpretations are problematic:

The equative marker either follows the noun or noun phrase that it refers to; or, occasionally, it follows the first noun of a noun phrase (although it may semantically refer to the whole phrase).[56] Neither is the case when interpreting šu e_2-ĝar$_8$-gen$_7$ gul-la as "like a hand that has destroyed a brick wall"; for this, one would expect either * šu e_2-ĝar$_8$ gul-la-gen$_7$ or * šu-gen$_7$ e_2-ĝar$_8$ gul-la.

The translation of šu e_2-ĝar$_8$-gen$_7$ gul-la with "a hand that has been destroyed like a brick wall" is grammatically possible, but semantically difficult: why should sleep be or have a destroyed hand?

A possible solution lies in the interpretation of the destruction. In other words: should šu e_2-ĝar$_8$-gen$_7$ gul-la be interpreted as "a hand that destroyed something like a brick wall has been destroyed" or as "a hand that destroyed something like a brick wall has destroyed something"?

The latter interpretation which sees the brick wall as the destructive entity[57] is confirmed by a similar metaphor in Ninurta's Exploits, ETCSL 1.6.2, line 173 (context: battle between Ninurta and Asag):[58]

a_2-sag$_3$ ^{d}nin-urta dumu ^{d}en-lil$_2$-la$_2$-še$_3$ e_2-ĝar$_8$-gen$_7$ mu-un-ši-gul-lu

50 Vanstiphout 2003, 123.
51 Wilcke 2015, 242.
52 Download: 21/01/2020.
53 Hallo 1983, 176.
54 Black 1998, 182.
55 Vanstiphout 1998, 400.
56 Heimpel 1968, 37–38; Sövegjártó 2010, 101–201.
57 The use of the vehicle "brick wall" as the destructive entity undoubtedly creates a certain ambiguity, as a brick wall destroys by being destroyed itself.
58 Transcription following van Dijk 1983, 73 (manuscript A_1 and, slightly different, A).

Asag collapses onto Ninurta, the son of Enlil, crushing him like a (collapsing) brick wall (literally: Asag destroys onto Ninurta, the son of Enlil, like a brick wall).[59]

The translation I suggested for the Lugalbanda passage is therefore:[60]

> (And finally,) sleep overcame the king.
> Sleep – the land of submission;
> a wave that has towered up; a hand that has crushed (literally: destroyed) like a (collapsing) brick wall;
> its hand is towering, its foot is towering;
> something that covers (the sleeping person) from its frontside with syrup,[61]
> (something) that covers (the sleeping person) from its frontside with syrup.

Sleep, the Destroyed Brick Wall (2): Sign Plays, Sound Plays, and Patterns of Repetition[62]

The Lugalbanda passage discussed in the previous paragraph display some interesting sign plays, sound plays, and patterns of repetition:

> 318. lugal-ra u_3-sa_2-ge sa_2 nam-ga-mu-ni-ib-dug_4
> 319. u_3-sa_2-ge kur nam-gu_2-ga-ke_4
> 320. ku-kur sukud dim_2-ma šu e_2-ĝar_8-gen_7 gul-la

59 Another, slightly different parallel for this image is given in Udug-Ḫul 8, line 3: a-la_2 ḫul e_2-ĝar_8 diri-ga-gen_7 lu_2-ra in-gu[l]-u_8-a he_2-me-en MIN $ša_2$ *ki-ma i-ga-ri i-qup-pu-ma* UGU L[U_2 *in-n*]*a-ba-tu at-ta*$_5$ "whether you are the evil *Alû*-demon who is like a wall that caves in and collapses upon the man" (Transcription and translation follow Geller 2015, 288). The author wonders whether the usage of diri in Lugalbanda I, ETCLS 1.8.2.1, line 323, and in Udug-Ḫul 8, line 3, is a coincidence or should be considered an intertextual link.

60 Note that the vehicles in the lines 318–324 describe sleep as active external power, something nobody can resist and everyone must surrender to (Guinan 2009, 196).

61 The description of sleep in terms of a fluid has its parallels in ancient Greek texts, see Steinert 2010, 242, fn. 24; Guinan 2009.

62 Sumerian literary compositions are replete with sign plays, sound plays, and patterns of repetition. The following examples may suffice: in some instances, the scribe obviously plays with the individual components of a compound, for instance, by repeating them several times with different readings. Examples: UD-gen7 zalag (= UD) mu-un-e3 (= UD.DU) (...) (Ninurta's Exploits, ETCSL 1.6.1, line 145); dungu (= IM.SI.A) dirig(= SI.A)-ga (Enki and the World Order, ETCSL 1.1.3, line 309); zag piriĝ-e muš-e-eš eme (= KAxME) e3-de3 kurku2 (KA.AN.NI.SI) KA si-il-le (Ninurta's Exploits, ETCSL 1.6.2, line 11). In other instances, the choice of the cuneiform signs adds meaning (on the sign level). Examples: e-šen for ešemen in a martial context (Inana and Ebiḫ, ETCSL 1.3.2, line 38); lu2-kur for lu2-kur2 (The lament for Sumer and Urim, ETCSL 2.2.3, line 278); Elsewhere, the reading of a Sumerian term evokes associations to other terms. Example: Play between a-ma-ru 'flood' and /emarru/ 'quiver' in Ninurta's return to Nibru, ETCSL 1.6.1, line 141–142. For the connection of subsequent lines by partially highly elaborate parallel structures, one example is given in this paper. Another example: Lugalbanda II, ETCSL 1.8.2.2, lines 143–147.

321. šu-bi sukud-am$_3$ ĝiri$_3$-bi sukud-am$_3$
322. niĝ$_2$ igi-bi-ta lal$_3$ šu$_2$-šu$_2$-e
323. igi-bi-ta lal$_3$ dirig-dirig-ga-e

- In line 318, the sign DI (= sa$_2$) is repeatedly used: as component of the term u$_3$-sa$_2$-ge and as part of sa$_2$ ... dug$_4$. Note further, that di is the infinite stem of dug$_4$, the latter likewise used in line 318.[63]
- U$_3$-sa$_2$-ge from line 318 is repeated in line 319, likewise nam and ga.
- Kur from line 319 is repeated in line 320.
- Sukud from line 320 is repeated twice in line 321; šu is repeated once.
- Šu 'hand' in line 321 attracted ĝiri$_3$ 'foot'.
- Either šu from line 321 attracted the (partial) homophone šu$_2$.š in line 322;[64] or, more likely, the contextually appropriate šu$_2$.š attracted the partially homophonic but contextually odd term šu.
- Finally, the term igi-bi-ta lal$_3$ from line 322 is repeated in line 323.

Structures and repetition patterns are created through not only the repetition of whole terms and phrases, but also of individual signs. Beyond that, there is word play at use, further associations between terms that were thought to belong together, with (partial) homophones, and with grammatical forms of a Sumerian term.

A Snake Devouring Carrion: Misleading Translation (Modern)

The next example stems from the composition Enki and the World Order, ETCSL 1.1.3, line 336.[65] Enki's installation of the god Kulla is described. This line reads as follows:

336. ^{ĝiš}al zu$_2$ sig$_9$-ga-ni muš ad$_6$ gu$_7$ niĝ$_2$ šu [ĝal$_2$]
That one (= ^{d}kulla), whose fixed 'hoe-tooth' is (like the tooth of) a muš ad$_6$ gu$_7$, ...[66]

The vehicle in this line, muš ad$_6$ gu$_7$, was translated into German as "Aas fressende Schlange" ("carrion devouring snake"), a vehicle considered "recht merkwürdig" by

63 In this case, it is difficult to decide whether the repetition of DI should be considered ludic writing or rather a consequence of Sumerian polyphony.

64 Possibly the idiomatic expression šu ... šu$_2$ 'to clasp, to clamp down' (Flückiger-Hawker 1999, 222, 353; Ceccarelli 2016, 45–46) also played a role.

65 Edition: Benito 1969. He does not comment further on the line discussed here.

66 Römer 1993, 409 hesitantly translated niĝ-šu-ĝal$_2$: "das, was dabei zur Verfügung steht." Similar Sjöberg on niĝ-šu-ĝal$_2$ in other context: "valuables, goods, (movable) property" (Sjöberg 1975, 191, 233).

Heimpel.[67] Pientka-Hinz adopted this interpretation in her article on "Schlangen" in the RlA and translated muš ad_6 gu_7 as "Leichen fressende Schlange", adding that only a few snake species eat carrion ("Aas", i.e. decaying meat), and those only in rare instances.[68] The present author suggests modern misunderstanding leads to this oddity. In German, "Aas" denotes the already decaying meat of a dead (non-human) animal.[69] In this aspect, it differs from the Sumerian /ad/,[70] for which decaying does not have to have (noticeably) started: Sumerian /ad/ denotes a corpse, a dead body, nonwithstanding its condition (whether already decaying or still fresh);[71] possibly even the corpse of an animal (or human) the snake has just killed (by its venomous bite).

Further questions arise from the description of the snake as ad_6 gu_7 "devouring a (human) corpse." Certainly, none of the existing snake species in Mesopotamia are large enough to devour a human corpse (although pictural representations of this situation are known from Mesopotamia and from Iran).[72] Thus, either the danger of the snake was exaggerated; or the vehicle muš ad_6 gu_7 was formed in analogy to more commonly attested vehicles such as ur ad_6 gu_7 "dog devouring corpses",[73] ušumgal ad_6 gu_7 "dragon devouring corpses",[74] or $te_8^{mušen}$ ad_6 gu_7 "te_8-bird (= vulture?) devouring corpses."[75]

Further, the act attributed to the vehicle – the devouring of (human) corpses – can be explained by the tenor, the hoe; the latter is described in the Song of the Hoe, ETCSL 5.5.4, line 74–75, as burying persons, but also bringing them out of the earth again;[76] as *tertium comparationis* between the blade of the hoe and the fangs of a snake devouring

67 Heimpel 1968, 498.

68 Pientka-Hinz 2009, 205 on muš-ad_6-gu_7.

69 The DUDEN Online Dictionary gives the following definitions for "Aas": "1a. [verwesende] Tierleiche, Kadaver; 1b. Fleisch verendeter Tiere; 2a. durchtriebener, gemeiner, niederträchtiger Mensch" (download: 21/01/2020).

70 Although corpses of human beings (ad_6 = LU_2×BAD) and of non-human animals (ad_3 = UDU×BAD, ad_x = GU_4×BAD) were distinguished at least on the graphical level, these boundaries were not always strictly upheld (see PSD A/III s.v. ad_6; Englund 2003, 5; Attinger 2005, 264 for references). This is not unlike German "Leiche" ("human or non-human dead body"), which is frequently used for human remains instead of "Leichnam" ("human dead body"). On the terms ad_3 = UDU×BAD and ad_x = GU_4×BAD, see Streck 2000: 265–266).

71 See the expression [ENEMY] ad_6-e-eš … ak "to make [ENEMY] a corpse", e.g. Ninurta's Return to Nibru, ETCSL 1.6.1, line 46 and 47 (Cooper 1978: 62; cf. the different translation by Attinger and Glenn 2017, 64, who take ad_6-e-eš as figurative expression: "(…) traita la montagne comme si elle était un cadaver"); Forerunner to Udug-Ḫul, line 184 (Geller 1985, 184): (…) lu_2-a ad_6 in-AK-e. On the terms /adda/'cadaver' and its orthographies, see Streck 2000, 265–266 (on ad3 = UDU×BAD and adx = GU4×BAD), and Veldhuis 2008, 224–226.

72 See von der Osten-Sacken 2009, 220; Kahler 2015, 21–22, 111 (figure 33).

73 Lugalbanda I, ETCSL 1.8.2.1, line 57; Inana B, ETCSL 4.07.2, line 127.

74 Ninurta's Return to Nibru, ETCSL 1.6.2, line 133.

75 Ḫendursaĝa A, ETCSL 4.06.1, Seg. A 81. On $te_8^{mušen}$, see the recent contribution by Verderame (2017, 404–405).

76 Song of the Hoe, ETCSL 5.5.4, line 74–75 (transliteration following ETCSL):
irigal-am_3 ^{ĝiš}al saĝ ki-a tum_2-ma

(human) corpses, one can therefore give (apart from the similarity in form[77]) the idea of removing completely from sight.

The vehicle "snake devouring corpses" serves therefore as a good example of the complexity of some Sumerian metaphors.[78]

The Urinating Lion: Scribal Creativity?

The last case study is taken from the composition Sargon and Ur-Zababa, ETCSL 2.1.4. The composition presents Ur-Zababa, the king of Kiš, in a negative light. The king is scared by an ominous dream of his cup-bearer (and future successor) Sargon. Ur-Zababa's emotional state is described as follows:

B 8. ud 5-am$_3$ ud 10-am$_3$ ba-zal-la-ta
B 9. lugal ^{d}ur-^{d}za-ba$_4$-ba$_4$ im-da-la$_2$ ki-tuš-bi-ta mi-ni-ib-ḫu-luḫ
B 10. pirig̃-gen$_7$ šag$_4$ pap-hal-la-na kaš$_3$ i$_3^{?!}$-BIZ.BIZ[79] šag$_4$-ba uš$_2$ lugud si-a-ba
B 11. i$_3$-kuš$_2$ ku$_6$ a mun lug-ga-gen$_7$ zi mu-un-di-ni-ib-ir-ir[80]
After five days, ten days had passed,
King Ur-Zababa was alert (?).[81] From his residence, something scared him.
Like a lion, he sprinkled urine onto the inner sides of his thighs. As within this (= the urine)[82] blood and pus were accumulated,

---

ad$_x$(BAD.LU$_2$) ^{ĝiš}al-e ki-ta tum$_2$-ma-am$_3$
"Concerning the grave: the hoe has buried persons
(but) corpses brings the hoe out of the earth (again)."

77 A venomous snake, ready to strike, has fangs, reminiscent of the 'tooth' (= blade) of a hoe.

78 Further, bronze works from Iran (Lurestan and Kermanshāh), whose handles have the form of an animal head and are, so to speak, spitting out the blade, are worth mentioning. The publisher of these bronze works connected these works with metaphors like the one discussed here. (Calmeyer 1969, 160; Wilcke 1987, 80–81). The handles have various forms such as lion and bird heads (e.g. Calmeyer 1969, 42, fig. 43; *ibid*. 131, fig. 136) as well as other unidentifiably and mythical animal heads (*ibid*. 71, fig. 71, identity of the animal is not clear; *ibid*. 69, fn. 239, table 4,4 and 4,5, sphinxes). On the "tooth" of the hoe, see further Wilcke 1987, in particular 80–82.

79 Following Attinger 2010–2019, 3, fn. 21.

80 Akkadian gloss: *a-ne-eḫ-ma šu ki-ma nu-un as-li* "he was tired, gasping for breath (?) like a fish" (Cooper – Heimpel 1983, 75). The vehicle in the gloss possibly describes a fish on dry land, slowly suffocating, gasping for breath, to whom the anxious, hyperventilating king is likened.

81 La$_2$ is used elliptically for igi … la$_2$ 'to be alert' (see B 45). On ellipsis in Sumerian, see Foxvog 2014.

82 The soiled thighs in B 10 must be Ur-Zababa's (human possessive suffix), while šag$_4$-ba uš$_2$ lugud si-a-ba refers to a non-human noun; either to the urine (as was assumed here) or the lion.

he was exhausted. Like a fish in brackish water,[83] he was worried because of him (= Sargon) (?).[84]

The description of the thighs, sprinkled with urine, ridicules Ur-Zababa, who is so sick with fear that he even soils himself. The image of the urinating lion may be taken from lions marking their territory with feces and urine;[85] this (derogatory) use of the vehicle piriĝ, however, is highly unusual, because the vehicle "lion" in Sumerian usually emphasizes a person's strength and power, and is frequently used for the king.[86] Assuming Ur-Zababa is the tenor, this metaphor should be considered an instance of a so-called creative metaphor,[87] a new, surprising deviation from the norms of language.[88]

It is also possible that Ur-Zababa is not the tenor. In this case, a dimensional case marker that was not written because of the equative marker (Sumerian does not use double case markings)[89] has to be reconstructed in the translation:

"like before/next to (?) a lion (i.e. as if he = Ur Zababa stood before/next a lion), he (= Ur-Zababa) sprinkled urine onto the inner sides of his thighs."

83 The picture outlined here is possibly of fish in shallow ponds, trapped during the periods of hot weather and low water level. As the water evaporates, the pond water becomes saltier and warmer, finally killing the fish in large numbers, as described by Westphal-Hellbusch and Westphal 1962, 26.

84 Attinger 2010–2019, 3: "Il est épuisé, tel un poisson vivant *(dans) l'eau salée*, il es angoissé à cause de lui."

85 On predators urinating to mark their territories, see Peterson 2007, 432, fn. 171, who suggested this interpretation for Lugal-e 172 (a da-bi-a mu-un-sur-sur-re; with da referring to the boundaries of the animal's territories), and who referred in this context to N 3400 + N 3401, rev. 3'–4': [....] x piriĝ gal ka du_8-a, [... ḫul]-$ĝal_2$-la a ba-da-an-sur-sur-ra [...] "... the great lion with open mouth [... the ev]il one urinated [...]."

86 On the metaphor lion = king, see Watanabe 2002, 42–56 and *passim*.

87 Note that the vehicle in the subsequent line, the fish, is also used elsewhere to describe a desperate situation, although with other words (see, for instance, Lugalbanda II, ETCSL 1.8.2.2, line 146: ku_6 $^{urud}dur_{10}$ ra; The Death of Gilgameš, Meturan Seg. A 16: ku_6 NUN, and Nippur Seg. A 18: ku_6 NUN [X X] ku_6 $keše_2$ ak-a; The Lament for Sumer and Ur, ETCSL 2.2.3, line 301: ku_6 šu dab_5-ba, and line 407a: ku_6 a-$niĝin_2$-na lug-ga). Possibly, this more or less "conventional" vehicle was intentionally used by the scribe to emphasize his creativity one line before, deliberately attempting to reinforce the unusual character of the vehicle just used.

88 Creative (or: poetic, see Nöth 1990, 130) metaphors are new, surprising deviations from the norms of language (Nöth 1990, 131), in opposition to "conventional metaphors", that are well known, stereotypical, clichéed.

89 Heimpel 1968, 27–28; Jagersma 2010, 203–204; Sövegjártó 2010, 100.

Conclusions

The presented case studies expose the importance of not only correctly translating metaphorical language, but also of closely examining their context of used and their semantics, and of considering similar phrases, as well as the use of particular signs. Although Sumerian metaphors have some aspects that may appear unexpected to us who live thousands of years later (without native speakers to refer to),[90] they can in numerous cases be understood within the context of ancient people's lives and environment. For metaphors not appearing comprehensible within this framework, other explanations must at least be taken into account: ancient or modern misreadings or misunderstandings, sign plays, or word plays,[91] but also the creative use of a common vehicle.

The examples discussed in this paper:

- the "flying falcon" that turned out to be a "bird flying/fleeing from a falcon's talons";
- the "cow of battle" that possibly was caused by the misunderstanding and subsequent re-interpretation of a term meaning a battle net;
- the sleep, whose relationship to the brick wall was at first not fully clear, but was shown to be like a brick wall destructive, allowing interesting observations at the sign level;
- the "snake devouring carrion", which wasn't a weird species of snake feeding on decayed meat (German "Aas"), but a snake devouring corpses (that it had produced itself by its venomous bite?), a vehicle serving as an illustrative example for the complexity of Sumerian metaphors;
- and, finally, the "urinating lion", which was either used as a creative vehicle to describe the anxious king Ur-Zababa (who is not the strong lion he ought to be, just a ridiculous urinating lion), or which should be translated in a totally different way, namely, as Ur-Zababa soiling himself as if he stood in front of/next to … a lion (= Sargon?),
- have hopefully served as examples of how at-first-incomprehensible metaphors finally can be comprehended – and of what still is left to be discovered.

90 See Black 1998, 10: "Of course Sumerian *is* an alien civilisation, separated from us in time virtually as far as it is possible to go, and part of the strangeness of its metaphorical language is simple unfamiliarity with the literary codes as well as with the material culture."

91 For this phenomenon that could not be included into this essay, some examples shall suffice: Lugalbanda II, ETCSL 1.8.2.2, lines 100 and 102: use of igi-tab in the sense of 'blinkers' in line 100, and in the sense of igi … tab in line 102; Lugalbanda II, ETCSL 1.8.2.2, line 256–258: multiple use of the element/sign IM with different meanings (note that this instance could also be counted as a playful writing on sign level). An especially interesting, but uncertain example is Enmerkara and the Lord of Arata, ETCSL 1.8.2.3, line 453, where the term ^{na4}gug (ZA.GUL) lul was possibly motivated by the consonance of GUL and LUL. If this interpretation is correct, this phrase serves as example for the blending of a play at the sign level and a play at the word level.

Bibliography

Attinger, P. 2005, "A propos de AK «faire» (II)", *Zeitschrift für Assyriologie und vorderasiatische Archäologie* 95, 208–275

—. 2009, Review of J. Ebeling – G. Cunningham (eds) 2007, *Analysing Literary Sumerian – corpus-based approaches*, *Zeitschrift für Assyriologie und vorderasiatische Archäologie* 99, 127–166.

—. 2010–2019, *La légende de Sargon (2.1.4)*, https://zenodo.org/record/2599633#.XOZIMkxuJHg (last download: 21.01.2020).

—. 2017, "Dumuzi et Ĝeštinana 36", *Nouvelle Assyriologiques Br*èves *et Utilitaires* 2017/35, 62–63.

Attinger, P. – Glenn, A. 2017, *Angim dimma (1.6.1)*, https://zenodo.org/record/2600241#.XZSCX3duJHg (last download: 21.01.2020).

Benito, C.A. 1969, *"Enki and Ninmah" and "Enki and the World Order"*, PhD Thesis, Ann Arbor.

Berlin, A. 1979, *Enmerkar and Ensuhkešdanna. A Sumerian Narrative Poem. Occasional Publications of the Babylon Fund 2,* Philadelphia: University Museum.

Black, J. 1980, Review of J. Cooper 1978, *The Return of Ninurta to Nippur*, *Archiv für Orientforschung* 27, 154 159.

—. 1995, "Real and Unreal Conditional Sentences in Sumerian", *Acta Sumerologica* 17, 15–39.

—. 1996, "The Imagery of Birds in Sumerian Poetry", in: M.E. Vogelzang – H.L.J. Vanstiphout (eds), *Mesopotamian Poetic Language: Sumerian and Akkadian, Proceedings of the Groningen Group for the Study of Mesopotamian Literature*, Groningen: Styx Publication, 23–46.

—. 1998, *Reading Sumerian Poetry*, London: A&C Black.

Black, J. – Zólyomi, G. 2007, "Introduction to the study of Sumerian", in: J. Ebeling – G. Cunningham (eds), *Analysing Literary Sumerian – corpus-based approaches*, London: Equinox, 1–32.

Black, M. 1962, *Models and Metaphors. Studies in Language and Philosophy*, Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

—. 1983, "Die Metapher", in: A. Haverkamp (ed), *Theorie der Metapher*, Wege der Forschung 389, Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 55–79.

—. 1983a, "Mehr über die Metapher", in: A. Haverkamp (ed): *Theorie der Metapher*, Wege der Forschung 389, Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 380–413.

Böck, B. 2014, *The Healing Goddess Gula. Towards an Understanding of Ancient Babylonian Medicine*, Leiden/Boston: Brill.

Calmeyer, P. 1969, *Datierbare Bronzen aus Luristan und Kirmanshah. Untersuchungen zur Assyriologie und Vorderasiatischen Archäologie* 5, Berlin/Boston: de Gruyter.

Ceccarelli, M. 2016, *Enki und Ninmah. Eine mythische Erzählung in sumerischer Sprache*, Orientalische Religionen in der Antike 16, Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck.

Civil, M. 2013, "Remarks on ad-gi$_4$ (a.k.a. 'Archaic Word List C' or 'Tribute')", *Journal of Cuneiform Studies* 65, 13–67.

Cooper, J. 1978, *The Return of Ninurta to Nippur*, Acta Orientalia 52, Roma: Pontificium Institutum Biblicum.

Cooper, J. – Heimpel, W. 1983, "The Sumerian Sargon Legend", *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 103, 67–82.

Delnero, P. 2006, *Variation in Sumerian Literary Compositions: A Case Study Based on the Decad*", PhD Thesis, Univerity of Philadelphia.

—. 2018, "On Editing Shulgi Hymns in the 21st Century (AD)", *Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde des Morgenlandes* 108, 297–312.

Duden Online Dictionary = https://www.duden.de/ (Bibliographisches Institut GmbH, 2019)

Ebeling, J. – Cunningham, G. (eds) 2007, *Analysing Literary Sumerian – corpus-based approaches*, London: Equinox.

Edzard, D.O. 1987, "Deep-Rooted Skyscrapers and Bricks: Ancient Mesopotamian Architecture and its Imagery", in: M. Mindlin – M.J. Geller – J.E. Wansbrough (eds): *Figurative Language in the Ancient Near East*, London: Routledge, 13–24.

—. 1993, "*Gilgames und Huwawa". Zwei Versionen der sumerischen Zedernwaldepisode nebst einer Edition von Version "B"*, Sitzungsberichte der Bayrischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, Philosophisch-Historische Klasse 4, München: Bayerische Akademie der Wissenschaften.

Englund, R. 2003, "Worcester Slaughterhouse Account", *Cuneiform Digital Library Bulletin* 2003/1 (https://cdli.ucla.edu/files/publications/CDLB2003_001.pdf, last download: 21.01.2020).

Falkenstein, A. 1965, Review of C.J. Gadd – S.N. Kramer 1963, *Ur Excavations Texts VI/1: Literary and Religious Texts 1*, *Bibliotheca Orientalis* 22, 279–283.

Feldt, L. 2007, "On divine-referent bull metaphors in the ETCSL Corpus", in: J. Ebeling – G. Cunningham (eds): *Analysing Literary Sumerian – corpus-based approaches*, London: Equinox, 184–214.

—. 2011, "Monstrous Identities: Narrative Strategies in Lugale and Some Reflections on Sumerian Religious Narrative", in: F. Hagen – J. Johnston – W. Monkhouse – K. Piquette – J. Tait – M. Worthington (eds), *Narratives of Egypt and the Ancient Near East. Literary and Linguistic Approaches*, Orientalia Lovaniensia Analecta 189, Leuven: Peeters, 123–164.

Flückiger-Hawker, E. 1999, *Urnamma of Ur in Sumerian Literary Tradition*, Orbis Biblicus et Orientalis 166, Fribourg/Göttingen: Universitätsverlag/Vandenhoeck&Ruprecht.

Foster, K.P. 2010, "Well-Tempered Words: Ceramic Metaphors in Mesopotamian Literature", in: S.C. Melville – A.L. Slotsky (eds), *Opening the Tablet Box: Near Eastern Studies in Honor of Benjamin R. Foster*, Leiden/Boston: Brill, 141–153.

Foxvog, D. 2014, "Ellipsis in Sumerian", in: N. Koslova – E. Vizirova – G. Zólyomi (eds), *Studies in Sumerian Language and Literature. Festschrift für Joachim Krecher*, Orientalia et Classica 56, Babel und Bibel 8, Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 209–248.

Gabbay, U. 2014, *The Eršema Prayers of the First Millennium BC*, Heidelberger Emesal-Studien 2, Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz.

Gadd, C.J. – Kramer, S.N. 1963, *Ur Excavation Texts 6. Literary and Religious Texts. First Part*, London: British Museum Press.
Geller, M.J. 1985, *Forerunners to Udug-Hul. Sumerian Exorcistic Incantations*, Freiburger Altorientalische Studien 12, Stuttgart: Steiner.
—. 2015, *Healing Magic and Evil Demons. Canonical Udug-hul Incantations*, Boston/Berlin: de Gruyter.
Green, M.W. 1984, "The Uruk Lament", *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 104, 253–279.
Grzimek, B. 1971, *Kriechtiere*, Grzimeks Tierleben Band 6, Zürich: Kindler.
Guinan, A. 2009, "Schlaf", *Reallexikon der Assyriolgie* 12, 195–202.
Hallo, W.W. 1983, "Lugalbanda excavated", *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 103, 165–180.
Heimpel, W. 1968, *Tierbilder in der sumerischen Literatur*, Studia Pohl 2, Roma: Pontificium Institutum Biblicum.
Jacobsen, T. 1987, *The Harps that once ... Sumerian Poetry in Translation*, New Haven/London: Yale University Press.
Jagersma, B. 2010, *A Descriptive Grammar of Sumerian*, PhD Thesis, Leiden University.
Jaques, M. 2004, "Inanna et Ebih: Nouveau textes et remarques sur le vocabulaire du combat et de la victoire", *Zeitschrift für Assyriologie und vorderasiatische Archäologie* 94, 202–225.
—. 2011, "Metaphern als Kommunikationsstrategie in den mesopotamischen Bußgebeten an den persönlichen Gott", in: M. Jaques (ed), *Klagetraditionen, Form und Funktion der Klage in den Kulturen der Antike*, Orbis Biblicus et Orientalis 251, Fribourg/Göttingen: Universitätsverlag/Vandenhoeck&Ruprecht, 3–19.
—. 2015, *Mon dieu qu'ai-je fait? Les diĝir-šà-dab$_{(5)}$-ba et la piété privée en Mésopotamie*, Orbis Biblicus et Orientalis 273, Fribourg/Göttingen: Universitätsverlag/Vandenhoeck&Ruprecht.
Kahler, B. 2015, *Schlangendarstellungen in Mesopotamien und Iran vom 8. bis 2. Jt. v. Chr. Quellen, Deutungen und kulturübergreifender Vergleich*, Hamburg: GRIN Verlag.
Kaneva, I. 2007, "Sumerian Comparative Clauses", *Babel und Bibel* 3, 523–527.
Kittay, E.F. 1987, *Metaphor. Its Cognitive Force and Linguistic Structure*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.
Kramer, S.N. 1969, "Sumerian Similes: A Panoramic View of Some of Man's Oldest Literary Images", *Jorunal of the American Oriental Society* 89, 1–10.
Krebernik, M. – Streck, M.P. 2001, "šumman lā qabi'āt ana balāṭim ... Wärst du nicht zum Leben berufen ... Der Irrealis im Altbabylonischen", in: R. Bartelmus – N. Nebes (eds), *Sachverhalt und Zeitbezug, Semitistische und alttestamentliche Studien, Adolf Denz zum 65. Geburtstag*, Wiesbaden: Harrassowiz, 51–78.
Lambert, W.G. 1987, "Devotion: the Languages of Religion and Love", in: M. Mindlin – M.J. Geller – J.E. Wansbrough (eds), *Figurative Language in the Ancient Near East*, London: Routledge, 25–39.
Landsberger B. 1958, *The Series HAR-ra = hubullu, Tablets V–VII*, Materialien zum sumerischen Lexikon 6, Roma: Gregorian and Biblical Press.

Ludwig, M.C. 2009, *Literarische Texte aus Ur: Kollationen und Kommentare zu UET 6/1–2*, Berlin/Boston: de Gruyter.

Meyer-Laurin, V. 2012, "Zum Alter des sumerischen Adverbiativs", in: C. Mittermayer – S. Ecklin (eds), *Altorientalische Studien zu Ehren von Pascal Attinger, mu-ni u_4 ul-li_2-a-aš ĝa_2-ĝa_2-de_3*, OBO 256, Fribourg/Göttingen, 215–241.

Mittermayer, C. 2009, *Enmerkara und der Herr von Arata. Ein ungleicher Wettstreit*, OBO 239, Fribourg/Göttingen.

—. 2012, "Enki und die Weltordnung Z. 250–262", in: C. Mittermayer – S. Ecklin (eds), *Altorientalische Studien zu Ehren von Pascal Attinger, mu-ni u_4 ul-li_2-a-aš ĝa_2-ĝa_2-de_3*, Orbis Biblicus et Orientalis 256, Fribourg/Göttingen: Universitätsverlag/Vandenhoeck&Ruprecht, 243–258.

Muntingh, L.M. 2007, "Animal Metaphors and Similes in Ancient Near Eastern Wisdom Literature", *Journal for Semitics* 16, 701–750.

Nöth, W. 1990, *Handbook of Semiotics*, Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Peterson, J. 2007, *A study of Sumerian faunal conception with a focus on the terms pertaining to the order Testudines*, PhD Thesis, University of Pennsylvania.

Pientka-Hinz, R. 2009, "Schlange. A", *Reallexikon der Assyriologie* 12, 202–218.

Pfitzner, J. 2017, "Dumuzid – Falke oder Vögelchen? Zu 'Dumuzid und Ĝeštinana', Z. 36", *Nouvelles Assyriologiques Br*èves *et Utilitaires* 2017/4, 5–7.

—. 2018, "The Wall. Zu Inhalt und Aufbau von Lugalbanda I, Z. 318–323", *Nouvelles Assyriologiques Br*èves *et Utilitaires* 2018/61, 103–106.

—. 2019, "Holy Cow! On Cattle Metaphors in Sumerian Literary Texts", in: R. Mattila – S. Ito – S. Fink (eds), *Animals and their Relation to Gods, Humans and Things in the Ancient World*, Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 137–173.

—. forthcoming, *Zur Bildersprache in den sumerischen Erzählungen*, PhD Thesis, Universität Wien.

Ponchia, S. 2009, "Some reflections on methaphor, ambiguity and literary tradition", in: M. Luukko – S. Svärd – R. Mattila (eds), *Of God(s), Trees, Kings, and Scholars: Neo-Assyrian and Related Studies in Honour of Simo Parpola*, Studia Orientalia 106, Helsinki: Finnish Oriental Society, 399–407.

Richards, I.A. 1936, *The Philosophy of Rhetoric*, New York/London: Oxford University Press.

Rolf, E. 2005, *Metapherntheorien. Typologie – Darstellung – Bibliographie,* Berlin/New York: de Gruyter.

Römer, W.H.Ph. (ed) 1993, *Weisheitstexte, Mythen und Epen. Mythen und Epen I*, Texte aus der Umwelt des Alten Testaments III, 3, Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlagshaus.

Römer, W.H.Ph. – Edzard, D.O. 1993, "Lugalbanda II", in: W.H.Ph. Römer (ed), *Weisheitstexte, Mythen und Epen. Mythen und Epen I*, Texte aus der Umwelt des Alten Testaments III, 3, Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlagshaus, 507–539.

Rubio, G. 2009, "Sumerian Literature", in: C. Ehrlich (ed), *From an Antique Land. An Introduction To Ancient Near Eastern Literature*, Lanham/Boulder/New York/Toronto/Plymouth: Rowman&Littlefield, 11–76.

Samaniego Fernández, E. – Velasco Sacristán, M. – Fuertes Olivera, P. A. 2005, "Translations we live by: the impact of metaphor translation in target systems", in: P.A. Fuertes Olivera (ed), *Lengua y sociedad: investigaciones recientes en la lingüistica aplicada*, Valladolid: Ediciones Universidad de Valladolid, 61–82.

Scurlock, J. – Anderson, B.R. 2005, *Diagnoses in Assyrian and Babylonian Medicine*, Urbana: University of Illinois Press.

Sefati, Y. 1998, *Love Songs in Sumerian Literature. Critical Edition of the Dumuzi-Inanna Songs*, Ramat-Gan: Bar-Ilan University Press.

Selz, G.J. 2011, "Remarks on the Empirical Foundation and Scholastic Traditions of Early Mesopotamian Acquisition of Knowledge", in: G.J. Selz – K. Wagensonner (eds), *The Empirical Dimensions of Ancient Near Eastern Studies / Die empirische Dimension altorientalischer Forschungen*, Wiener offene Orientalistik 6, Wien: LIT Verlag, 49–70.

—. Forthcoming, "The World Behind the Words. Reflections on Concepts Crossing Linguistic Boundaries", in: V. Sadovski – J. Braarvig et al. (eds), *Multilingualism Volume*.

Seminara, S. 2001, *La versione accadica del "Lugal-e". La tecnica babilonese della traduzione dal sumerico e le sue regole*, Roma: Università degli Studi Roma "La Sapienza".

Sjöberg, A. 1975, "in-nin šà-gur$_4$-ra. A Hymn to the Goddess Inanna by the en-Priestess Enheduanna", *Zeitschrift für Assyriologie und vorderasiatische Archäologie* 65, 161–253.

Sladek, W.R. 1974, *Inanna's Descent to the Netherworld*, PhD Thesis, The John Hopkins University, Baltimore.

Sövegjártó, Sz. 2010, "The Sumerian Equative Case", *The Odd Yearbook* 8, 95–109.

Steinert, U. 2010, "Der Schlaf im Licht der altmesopotamischen Überlieferung", in: D. Shehata – F. Weiershäuser – K.V. Zand (eds), *Von Göttern und Menschen. Beiträge zu Literatur und Geschichte des Alten Orients, Festschrift für Brigitte Groneberg,* Cuneiform Monographs 41, Leiden/Boston: Brill, 237–285.

Streck, M.P. 1999, *Die Bildersprache der akkadischen Epik*, Alter Orient und Altes Testament 264, Münster: Ugarit Verlag.

—. 2000, "Keilschrifttexte aus Münchener Sammlungen", *Zeitschrift für Assyriologie und vorderasitatishe Archäologie* 90, 263–280.

Thomsen, M.-L. 1984, *The Sumerian Language. An Introduction to its History and Grammatical Structure*, Copenhagen: Akademisk Forlag.

Van Dijk, J. 1983, *LUGAL UD ME-LÁM-bi NIR-ĜÁL. Texte, Traduction et Introduction. Tome II. Introduction à la Reconstruction du Texte Inventaire des Textes – Partition – Copies des Originaux*, Leiden: Brill.

Vanstiphout, H.L.J. 1998, "Reflections on the Dream of Lugalbanda (A typological and interpretative analysis of LH 322–365)", in: J. Prosecký (ed), *Intellectual Life of the Ancient Near East. Papers Presented at the 43rd Rencontre assyriologique international Prague, July 1–5, 1996*, Praha: Academy of Science of the Chech Republic, 397–437.

—. 2003, *Epics of Sumerian Kings. The Matter of Aratta*, Writings of the Ancient World 20, Atlanta: SBL Press.

Veldhuis, N. 2004, *Religion, Literature, and Scholarship: The Sumerian Composition "Nanše and the Birds"*, Cuneiform Monographs 22, Leiden/Boston: Brill.

—. 2008, "Orthography and Politics: adda, 'carcass' and kur9, 'to enter', in: Michalowski, P. (ed), *On the Third Dynasty of Ur. Studies in Honor of Marcel Sigrist*, Boston: The American School of the Oriental Research, 223-229.

Verderame, L. 2017, "The Seven Attendants of Hendursaĝa: A study of animal symbolism in Mesopotamian cultures", in: L. Feliu – F. Karahashi – G. Rubio (eds), *The First Ninety Years. A Sumerian Celebration in Honor of Miguel Civil*, Studies in Ancient Near Eastern Records 12, Boston/Berlin: de Gruyter, 369–415.

Von der Osten-Sacken, E. 2009, "Schlange. C. In der Bildkunst", *Reallexikon der Assyriologie* 12, 219–221.

Wantanabe, Ch.E. 2002, *Animal Symbolism in Mesopotamia. A Contextual Approach*, Wiener Offene Orientalistik 1, Wien: LIT Verlag.

Wellek, R. – Warren, A. 1972, *Theorie der Literatur*, Frankfurt: Fischer.

Westphal-Hellbusch, S. – Westphal, H. 1962, *Die Ma'dan. Kultur und Geschichte der Marschenbewohner im* Süd-*Iraq*, Forschungen zur Ethnologie und Sozialpsychologie 4, Berlin: Duncker&Humblot.

Wilcke, C. 1968, "Das modale Adverb i-gi$_4$-in-zu im Sumerischen", *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 27, 229–242.

—. 1976, "Formale Gesichtspunkte in der sumerischen Literatur", *Assyriological Studies* 20, 205–316.

—. 1987, "A Riding Tooth: metaphor, metonymy and synecdoche, Quick and Frozen in Everyday Language", in: M. Mindlin – M.J. Geller – J.E. Wansbrough (eds), *Figurative Language in the Ancient Near East*, London: Routledge, 77–102.

—. 2010, "Sumerian: What We Know and What We Want to Know", in: L. Kogan – N. Koslova – S. Loesov – S. Tishchenko (eds), *Language in the Ancient Near East, Proceedings of the 53e Rencontre Assyriologique Internationale* (Vol. 1, Part 1), Babel und Bibel 4/1, Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 5–76.

—. 2012a, *The Sumerian Poem Enmerkar and En-Suhkeš-ana: Epic, Play, or? Stage Craft at the Turn from the Third to the Second Millennium B.C. With a Score-Edition and a Translation of the Text*, American Oriental Series Essay 12, New Haven: American Oriental Society.

—. 2012b, "Lustschrei oder Schmerzensschrei? – Noch einmal: Enki's ‚Segnung' des Tigris", *Nouvelles Assyriologiques Br*èves *et Utilitaires* 2012/60, 79–83.

—. 2015, "Vom klugen Lugalbanda", in: K. Volk (ed), *Erzählungen aus dem Land Sumer*, Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 203–272.

Live and Let Live Images: Metaphor and Interpictoriality in Neo-Assyrian Art

Ludovico Portuese (Freie Universität Berlin)

Theoretical Premises: Interpictoriality, Metaphor, and Image Metaphor

With this paper I examine a group of reliefs of Ashurbanipal (668–631 BCE) from the Southwest and North Palace at Nineveh. This king, as a known antiquarian, consciously adopted different antique iconographic motifs from his predecessors that had fallen out of use. In particular, three case studies are presented: the bird of prey of the battlefield; the lotus flower held by the king; the lion hunt. The analysis is carried out through three different methodological approaches.

The first approach relies on the concept of interpictoriality (other terms are intericonicity, intervisuality, intertextuality of images), which refers to the process of an image referring to another image. In the past, a variety of terminologies has been used to describe the relation of one work of art to another: imitation, plagiarism, copy, variation, paraphrase, reception, quotation, inversion, allusion, homage, irony, parody or theft. These terms somehow imply a degree of prejudice and denigration of the resulting product. More recently, the term interpictoriality (in German Interpikturalität or Interbildlichkeit) has been proposed as an overall term that should capture all the above-mentioned relationships without a moral judgement. This concept is widely thought of as analogous to the concept of literary intertextuality and argues that many works of art, as much as literary or non-literary written or spoken verbal texts, contain explicit or implicit references to other works of art or images.[1] Using the words of Von Rosen, interpictoriality examines the "Relationen zwischen Bildern sowie die Modi ihrer Transformation von Einem in ein Anderes", with the consequence that cases of interpictoriality spark a kind of déjà-vu effect in the viewer, that is to say a feeling of familiarity, of having already seen that image.[2] This method tries to understand how exactly one image refers to another and/or whether

1 Gamer 2013, 115–116.

2 "[T]he relationships between images as well as the modi of their transformation from one into another", Von Rosen 2011, 208; English translation in Gamer 2013, 116. See also Chéroux 2010, 56–85.

this transfer is based on conscious or unconscious decisions by the artist/patron.[3] Interpictoriality is thereby not so much interested in identifying references per se, but is more interested in the reasons that lie behind these references. Accordingly, aside the questions where from and what, interpictoriality asks also why and how images are re-used.

Art history and modern photography show that the phenomenon of interpictoriality is found in every epoch and visual culture. For example, Dimitri Laboury has deployed the concept of interpictoriality to cast off modern biases against copying and imitation in Egyptian art, and redefines ancient Egyptian art as productive tradition where creativity and originality is achieved via interpictorial responses to other images. Thus, variations in works of art cannot be regarded always as mistakes but actually sources and expressions of creativity.[4] In much the same way, Clément Chéroux examines Thomas E. Franklin's photograph of three firefighters "Raising the Flag at Ground Zero" (September 11, 2001), whose composition and ideas conveyed refer to the Joe Rosenthal's photograph of six marines "Raising the Flag on Iwo Jima" (February 23, 1945). Against the definition of these images as palimpsests, that is reflecting other images from the nation's visual memory scraping or washing off the initial image, Chéroux defines Franklin and Rosenthal's photographs as cases of interpictoriality, arguing that mechanisms of interpictoriality can reveal hidden and intentional meanings that could influence the viewer historically, politically and, especially, psychologically.[5]

Finally, in dealing with the mechanisms of interpictoriality, I should clarify a semantic difference between image and picture. In fact, there seems to be a basic difference in English – in other modern languages as well – between the two terms and I will quote W. J. Thomas Mitchell for a practical and trenchant definition: "The picture is a material object, a thing you can burn or break or tear; an image is what appears in a picture, and what survives its destruction – in memory, in narrative, in copies and traces in other media. [...] The picture, then, is the image as it appears in a material support or a specific place. [...] The image never appears except in some medium or other, but it is also what transcends media, what can be transferred from one medium to another [...]."[6] The image, then, is a highly abstract and rather minimal entity that can be evoked with a single word.[7]

---

3 In the environment of ancient Near Eastern art, ancient sources show that the Assyrian kings took a personal interest in the design and construction of their palaces and their interior decoration. There is also mention of the craftsmanship involved in the execution of the patron's projects (Nadali and Verderame 2019). However, there is no explicit reference to specific artistic personalities. Compared to Greek or Roman art, where the originality and individual artistic personality were highly venerated and celebrated, in the ancient Near East there seems to have been no intention to identify specific figures (Gunter 1990 and 2019; Nadali 2014, 469–471). In any event, the word artist will be used throughout the following pages without any fruitless controversial distinction between artist, artisan, or craftsman, being the basic definition sufficient to define anyone who paints, draws, or makes sculptures.

4 Laboury 2017.

5 Chéroux 2010, 82–85.

6 Mitchell 2015, 16–18.

7 On the semantic distinction, based on modern linguistic difference and inference, between "image" and "picture", see also Belting 2001, 11–55, esp. 14–18, 2005; Nadali 2012, 584.

The second approach centres on George Lakoff and Mark Johnson's Conceptual Metaphor Theory. This theory conceives metaphor not only as a question of language but of thinking and consequently of behaving. Metaphors are therefore pervasive not only in certain genres striving to create some artistic effect, but also in the most neutral and causal used forms of language. Accordingly, some linguistic metaphors are part of native speakers' mental lexicon. In detail, the Conceptual Metaphor Theory involves understanding one domain of experience, which is generally more abstract, in terms of a very different domain of experience, which is more concrete and readily comprehensible. In few words, in our effort to understand the world, it makes easier to conceptualize the cognitively less easily accessible domains in terms of the more easily accessible ones. A conceptual metaphor is a systematic set of correspondences, or mappings, between two domains of experience. More technically, for instance, when talking about argumentation (arguments, discussions, debates, etc.), we find in English a number of expressions such as "your claims are indefensible"; "he attacked every weak point in my argument"; "his criticisms were right on target"; "I demolished his argument." What is common to all these expressions is the use of war and battle terms to express the experience of argumentation where, however, the words "indefensible", "attack", "on target", "demolish" are not meant literally but figuratively to represent arguments. Thus, we are dealing with the concept "argument" in terms of war: this conceptual structure can be said to be metaphorical. In this case the conceptual metaphor is ARGUMENT IS WAR, where ARGUMENT (target domain) is partially structured, understood, performed and talked about in terms of WAR (source domain). The concept is metaphorically structured, and, consequently, the language is metaphorically structured.[8] A further metaphorical example may also deal with spatial orientation, such as up-down, in-out, front-back, on- off, deep-shallow, central-peripheral: for instance, in the sentence "I'm feeling up today", the concept HAPPY is oriented UP so that HAPPY IS UP. These are called by Lakoff and Johnson Orientational Metaphors and organize a whole system of concepts with respect to one another.[9] Therefore, Conceptual Metaphor Theory focuses on the cognitive processes behind language representation, with particular emphasis on the relationships between metaphorical conceptualization and figurative meaning.

Now, since metaphors reside not only in language but also in thought and we use metaphors not only to speak about certain aspects of the world but also to think about them, they are often highly conventional. Thus, metaphors can be found in any form of communication in any time and language with the consequence that this theory can be applied also to past culture evidence. Additionally, by regarding metaphors as an essential process and product of the mind, metaphor is not only essential to the language but also to art. In fact, metaphors are pivotal also in nonverbal manifestations. Referring to Rudolf Arnheim's study related to art and visual thinking, George Lakoff discovered that Arnheim had written about the phenomenon of conceptual metaphor long before Lakoff came up with that idea. Lakoff starts off his analysis from the so-called *image schemas*, which are not

8 Further examples can be found in Lakoff and Johnson 1980, 4–5.

9 Lakoff and Johnson 1980, 15–19.

concrete images that one can see, but schemas, mental images, or cognitive structures that fit many scenes that you can see. They reflect the shape of an object, its location, the trajectory of movement: in the sentence "Harry walked through the kitchen into the dining room", the meaning of *into* consists of a CONTAINER, that is a bounded region in space, and a PATH, with a SOURCE and a GOAL.[10] In dealing with image schemas, Lakoff turned to Arnheim's thought, where he wrote that the reason why language is so important for the process of thinking is that people do not think only by means of words, but by means of visual images, and that many words are recognizably figurative.[11] In this respect, Arnheim provides the sentence "profundity of mind" as example, which contains the Latin *fundus*, that is bottom, so that the 'depth' of a well and 'depth' of thought are described by the same word.[12] Thus, the notion of the depth of thought is derived from physical depth. This example, as Arnheim highlights, points out that many words are recognised as metaphorical expressions, the source of which is perceptual experience.

In the light of this analysis, Lakoff observes that Arnheim had a basic understanding of metaphor as conceptual, not merely linguistic, and of the conceptual as based on the perceptual, with the suspicion that Arnheim had the idea that structures like image schemas actually give form to art, and that metaphors apply to image schemas in works of art, to give meaning to the work of art.[13] The practical application of this axiom is demonstrated by the example provided by Lakoff through Rembrandt's *Christ at Emmaus*, whose description by Arnheim Lakoff translates into the language of cognitive linguistics as follows: "A grouping is the imposition of a CONTAINER schema, a bounding of a region of space with figures contained within. Arnheim describes two such schemas, one without the servant boy and one with him. In the inner CONTAINER schema, Christ is in the center and highest. The metaphors interpreting this arrangement are IMPORTANT IS CENTRAL and DIVINE IS UP. Not only is Christ, the divine, the highest, but he is looking up, toward the divine God. In the upper grouping, the servant boy appears. He is painted as being in the middle of an action, serving Christ food. This puts him socially below Christ, but Christ is painted as below him, the metaphor being HUMILITY IS DOWN. The same metaphor interprets the structure of the servant boy's body: he is bowing, tilting his body down toward Christ, showing his humility. The action of serving Christ food is metaphorical for serving Christ. The light emanating from Christ instantiates one of our culture's basic metaphors for God: God is the source of what is good, in this case the source of light, which is interpreted via two conventional metaphors: MORALITY IS LIGHT and KNOWLEDGE IS LIGHT. The image schemas structuring the painting are orientational: HIGH-LOW, two CONTAINER schemas, two CENTER- PERIPHERY schemas, and LIGHT-DARK. Our conventional cultural

10 Lakoff 2006, 153–154.

11 "What makes language so valuable for thinking, then, cannot be thinking in words. It must be the help that words lend to thinking while it operates in a more appropriate medium, such as visual imagery" (Arnheim 1969, 231–232).

12 Arnheim 1969, 232–233.

13 *Ibid*.; Lakoff 2006, 153–158. See also Limont 2014, 73–76.

metaphors apply to these schemas structuring the painting, to give it a meaning expressing an important aspect of the Protestant religious tradition: The ordinary person serves Christ in all humility, while Christ, the most important figure as the source of goodness and knowledge, sets the example, showing his own humility relative to people, and looking upward to God."[14] This analysis implies that in a work of art the important thing is the basic scheme of the composition, which is the carrier of the most significant content. A more fundamental consequence is, however, the fact that to fully understand a work of art we must experience it and metaphors must be correctly interpreted, because conceptual metaphors can be part of a work of art – a painting in this instance – or underpin its composition. Using the words of Lakoff, "Arnheim's point is that form is not just form; metaphors apply to forms to give meaning. Form is therefore a vehicle for inference, and the content of the inference depends on the metaphor."[15]

The third methodological approach is similar to the Conceptual Metaphor Theory, but relies on a different type of metaphor that maps conventional mental images onto other conventional mental images by virtue of their internal structure. George Lakoff refers to these as Image Metaphors. In the example "My wife ... whose waist is an hourglass", quoting Lakoff "we understand this as an image mapping in which the mental image of an hourglass is mapped onto the mental image of the wife, with the central narrow portion of the hourglass corresponding to the wife's waist."[16] To map the hourglass image onto the woman image, both images must be therefore structured in terms of a general shape. Accordingly, image metaphors occur when there is both a source image and a target image that the source image maps onto. This kind of metaphors differs from the conceptual ones, because they are not usually used in everyday reasoning, they more often map image structure rather than propositional structure, and they do not interpret the abstract in terms of the concrete. Thus, image metaphors have their basis in and reflect physical similarity, and their presence in a text depends on the extent to which shapes, textures and other physical phenomena form the subject matter.[17]

Having set out the theoretical premises, I will now turn to the three case studies coming from the reliefs of Ashurbanipal in order to track the way metaphors travelled through time according to the rules of the mechanism of interpictoriality.

The Bird of Prey

The first case study is represented by the bird of prey of the battlefield depicted in the reliefs showing the Battle of Til-Tuba, which came originally from Room 33 of the Southwest Palace at Nineveh and now in the British Museum collection (fig. 1). The open space where the battle takes place is divided into three horizontal registers, each indicated by a ground line.

14 Lakoff 2006, 156.
15 *Ibid*.
16 Lakoff 1987, 219.
17 Shuttleworth 2017, 175–176.

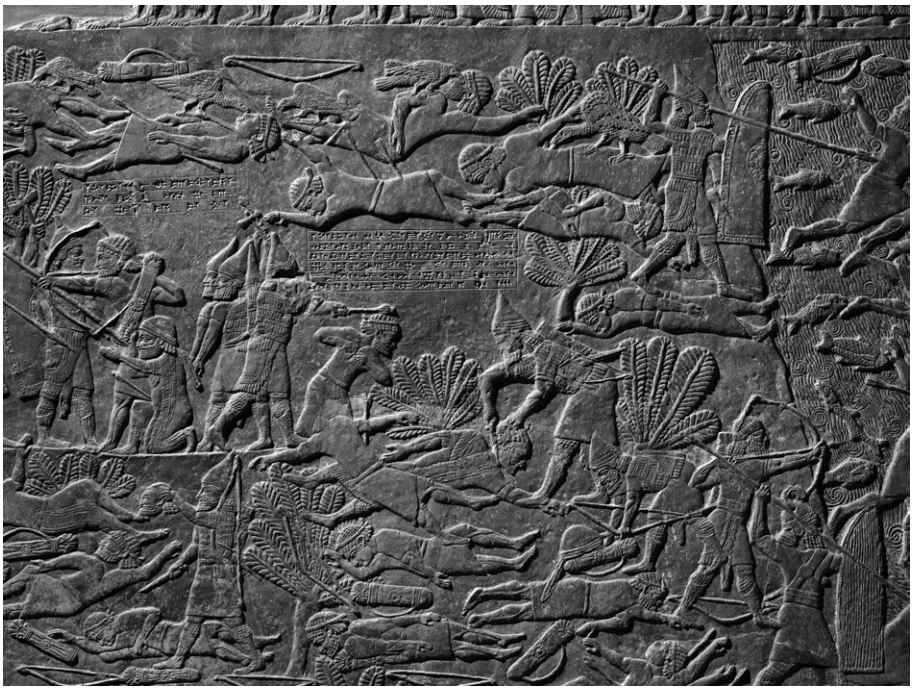


Fig. 1: Nineveh, Southwest Palace, Room 33, relief of Ashurbanipal, detail from a sequence of the Battle of Til-Tuba. British Museum, 124801 (© The Trustees of the British Museum)

The story starts in the middle of the top register, and flows from left to right; it turns to the lower register, then returns to the top register and moves out to the left of the scene. The scene is absolutely crammed with detail, focusing on the fate of the Elamite king, Teumman, and his son, Tammaritu. These main characters indicate the direction and movement of the story and how it develops. This pictorial narrative method was defined as "continuous style", which leads the viewer to follow the story unconsciously from the point of view of the protagonists and proceeds linearly, namely in one direction as it unfolds.[18]

Within the chaotic and highly animated episode the sequence of five birds of prey devouring parts of the faces and limbs of corpses of Elamites lying on the ground stands out for its intentionally slow cadence and visual prominence. The ferocious scene is positioned above three prominent narratives of the battle: first, Teumman kneels beside Tammaritu who resists by drawing his bow; second, Tammaritu is next shown being executed with a blow from a mace, and his decapitated body lies on top of his father, who has been forced to the ground and is about to be beheaded; third, in the middle register, an Assyrian soldier

18 For a careful analysis of the scene, its style and compositional scheme, see Watanabe 2008a, 321–325 and 2008b, with references to previous literature.

walks joyfully towards the left, waving Teumann's head. The main and largest epigraph dominating the daunting episode states: "Teumman, king of Elam, was wounded in fierce battle. Tammaritu, his eldest son, took him by the hand and they fled to save their lives. They hid in the midst of a forest. With the encouragement of Assur and Ishtar, I killed them. I cut off their heads before one another."[19] By superimposing these scenes, one may note that the birds of prey and the practice of decapitation are visually associated: the birds of prey devouring Elamites catch the attention of the viewer on the most salient scene of the battle, that is the beheading of the Elamite king and his son, and anticipate the fate of Teumman and Tammaritu. Moreover, one must observe that of the four corpses pecked by the birds, only two have their heads being devoured by the birds: this seems to me a clear allusion to Teumman and Tammaritu, whose decapitation is about to happen.

Whilst looking at this picture, the mechanism of interpictoriality sparks a kind of "déjà-vu" effect in the viewer, a feeling of having already seen that picture. In fact, a very similar scene of birds of prey devouring dead bodies is found on the reliefs from the throne room of the Northwest Palace of Ashurnasirpal II (883–859 BCE) at Kalhu, in particular on the reliefs labelled B-3, lower register, and B-11, upper register.[20] Further partially similar instances are found in a drawing made by Layard and a relief originally coming from the palace of Tiglath-pileser III (744–727 BCE), which show a vulture carrying entrails in its claws and beak.[21] The latter actually show the bird in its role of a bird of prey. However, the subject presents a bird quite different in appearance and the composition greatly diverges from that of Ashurnasirpal II and Assurbanipal's battle reliefs, suggesting that the image source or model for Ashurbanipal's reliefs was Ashurnasirpal II's figurative program, whose palace was certainly extant and still visited at the time of Ashurbanipal.[22] In addition, as noted by Rita Dolce, on Ashurnasirpal II's reliefs it seems a deliberate choice to employ two different size scales of heads in the same figurative representation, with the consequence that the birds may attack both anonymous heads and heads of individuals who can probably be identified as prominent.[23] Such an association between birds of prey and decapitation is clearly adopted by Ashurbanipal's artists, where the actions of the birds of prey, like the practice of decapitation itself, are selective, that is to say they peck the heads of anonymous individuals but hover above prominent characters. Therefore, I conclude that since no similar scenes have been found in the period that intervened

19 Russell 1999, 170–171.

20 In other examples from the same palace, however, the big bird is depicted as an active participant in battle, providing encouragement for the army, and in only one instance in direct association with the king himself. For an overview of the occurrences of the bird on the reliefs lining the south wall of the throne room of Ashurnasirpal II, see Meuszyński 1981, pl. 2.

21 Barnett and Falkner 1962, pls. XLI, LXVII.

22 Either the eagle or the vulture (or both) is a plausible identification of the bird represented on the Assyrian reliefs. At this stage of the research, however, I hesitate from making a definitive statement on this issue. That the Northwest Palace of Ashurnasirpal II, and thus Kalhu itself, was regularly visited at the time of Ashurbanipal is proved by a number of archaeological evidence (Postgate and Reade 1976–1989, 311–314, 322; Reade 2011, 117–118).

23 Dolce 2018, 50, figs. 4.9a–c.

between Ashurnasirpal II and Ashurbanipal, the image of the birds of prey devouring dead bodies are probably interpictorially related, in the sense that they instantiate the same thematic subject. In detail, by focusing on a strictly formalistic system of categorisation, according to the one proposed by Nina Heydemann, it could be ascertained that in this instance the following strategies of representation come into play: the composition of Ashurbanipal's relief being referred to is multiplied through the so-called strategy of multiplication, and something is added or taken away from the quoted artwork through the so-called strategy of addition or subtraction.[24] In fact, the number of birds increases, from two to five, and the number of dead bodies being devoured moves from two to four accordingly; the composition changes orientation and the birds have closed wing feathers.

Although the conclusion that Ashurbanipal's artists have drawn inspiration from a past example appears unavoidable, one must equally recognise that a semantic reinterpretation of the motif occurs in the process of transmission. On some of Ashurnasirpal II's reliefs the bird was shown actively assisting the Assyrian forces in battle together with the winged disk – a symbol that encompasses multiple associations which include Ninurta, Assur and Shamash – and more specifically was interpreted as a reference or allusion to Anzu, the chief emblem of the god Ninurta.[25] As pointed out by Mehmet-Ali Ataç, the symbolic affinity or association with the winged disk suggests that the bird was considered as an auspicious token, an element of aid and encouragement in the battle, the visual metaphor of a kind of good luck or good fortune and royal destiny that bears the sense of a successful outcome.[26] Now, neither the winged disk nor metaphoric meanings are apparently present in Ashurbanipal's sources. Rather, it seems that Ashurbanipal's artists visually emptied the bird of its divine and symbolic connotations, using it as visual metaphor of royal fortune and successful victory. In fact, there must be a concept or a conceptual metaphor in Ashurbanipal's relief, because the scene is neither a simplistic moment of the battle nor the end of the battle; instead it ratifies the successful stage of the battle, which is the killing of the enemy king. Accordingly, the entire scene can be described in the language of cognitive linguistics as follows: a group of birds of prey devouring five corpses are directly located above the main characters of the episode, who are also the goal of the entire battle. This indicates that the presence of the birds of prey prefigures

24 Heydemann 2015, 16. Each work of art may display different kinds of interpictorial artistic strategies and the cases of transmission can be diverse, shifting from simple to complex quotation, transformation and re-adaptation of images. To the strategies of multiplication, addition, and subtraction, the composition, motif or figure of the artwork being referred to can be replaced with something else (strategy of substitution), or it can be divided or combined with references to other art-works (strategy of division or combination).

25 Pering 1932–1933, 287; Ataç 2018a, 44–47; Dolce 2018, 50. In the art of earlier ancient Mesopotamia and also in the first millennium Assyria, Anzu was represented as a lion-headed eagle: each animal body part conveyed a particular notion derived from its original function, thus its composite body structure provides multiple options, which evoke corresponding ideas and concepts related to the context. On this issue, see Winter 1985, 14; Watanabe 2002, 126–136. For the winged disk, see Ornan 2005; Ataç 2010.

26 Ataç 2018a, 43–51.

the successful victory of the battle, that is to say that they are the very visual metaphor of the victory. The conceptual metaphor interpreting this arrangement is THE SUCCESS COMES FROM A BIRD OF PREY, where the target domain, SUCCESS, is structured in terms of a source domain, BIRD OF PREY. Another conceptual metaphor is DIVINE IS UP. In fact, although the birds do not stand for the divine, they are placed above the general action, much as in Ashurnasirpal II's reliefs, they point out that SUCCESS IS UP, that is it comes from gods. This metaphor is further emphasised by the epigraph, which states "With the encouragement of Assur and Ishtar, I killed them. I cut off their heads before one another." Thus, through the text, Assur is seemingly again associated with the birds of prey, as in Ashurnasirpal II's reliefs. But if DIVINE IS UP, by contrast, Teumann and Tammaritu are looking down: this puts them socially and politically below the divine and the Assyrians, the metaphor being HUMILITY IS DOWN. Therefore, the metaphors used in these schemas structure the entire composition, and give it a meaning expressing an important aspect of the battle and the victory: the enemy bows down to the Assyrians in total humility and submission at the behest of the natural forces which stand for the gods. These metaphors, together with the epigraph describing the beheading of the Elamites Teumman and Tammaritu, add further visual and textual cues that explain and reinforce the message and might be expected to focus the attention of the illiterate or foreign viewer.

The Lotus Flower

After the victory over the Elamites, Ashurbanipal engages in a celebratory banquet with distinct ritual overtones, depicted in the famous "garden scene", a relief slab thought to have fallen from the upper level of Room S (named Room S[1]) in the North Palace of Ashurbanipal at Nineveh (fig. 2). In the second case I examine, Ashurbanipal reclines on a couch opposite the queen, with a laden table between them, and holds a lotus blossom in one hand and a bowl in the other, under a grapevine canopy. Ashurbanipal's eyes focus on a decapitated head, almost certainly that of Teumman, which hangs from a fir tree.[27] The setting of the episode is often thought to be the private gardens of Ashurbanipal's

27 As Bonatz 2004, 93 notes, heads of individuals that had been beheaded normally remained anonymous objects or only rarely were named in sources. In Neo-Assyrian times, the earliest evidence for individually named heads is given by the king Esarhaddon and this becomes more evident as human trophy and image of power in the reign of Ashurbanipal. Although there are numerous references in the royal inscriptions of Ashurbanipal to the decapitation of Teumann and its display at the city gates of Nineveh and Arbela during triumphal celebrations, nonetheless there is no mention of its display in the garden (for references, see in particular, Bonatz 2004; Russell 1999, 154–209). Therefore, the identification of the hanging head in the "garden scene" with that of Teumann remains a conjecture in the absence of an epigraph on the relief (see, in this respect, Ataç 2018b, 155).

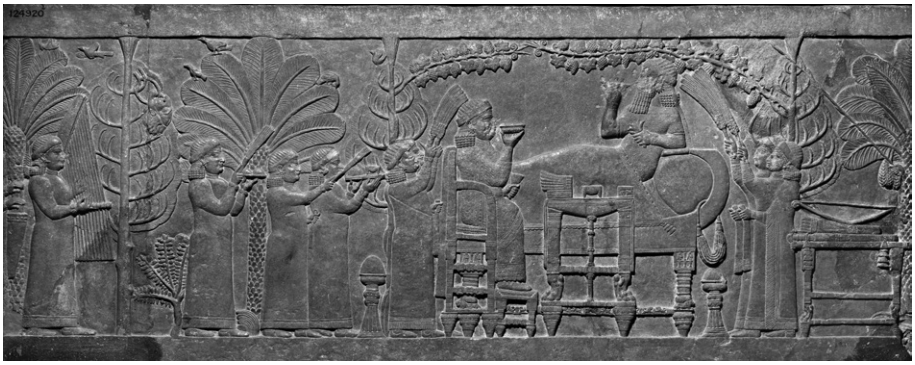


Fig. 2: Nineveh, North Palace, Room S[1], relief of Ashurbanipal, the "garden scene." British Museum, 124920 (© The Trustees of the British Museum)

queen, identified with Libbali-sharrat, primarily on the basis of the presence of an all-female body of attendants and musicians surrounding the royal couple.[28]

This composition has been explored by a number of scholars, who differently argue for a political and military reading, or bestow a gender or regenerative symbolism upon the scene. Pauline Albenda, in her detailed analysis, interpreted the entire episode as the first representation of an unknown theme in Assyrian art, that is peace. Quoting Albenda: "Its aspect as the state of tranquillity is stressed on the bas-reliefs by the calm and peaceful nature of wildlife and the rich fullness of plant life." Besides, she suggested that the "garden scene" stands for several chronologically different victories represented by the trophies once possessed by the kings of Elam, Egypt, and Babylonia, such as the sword, bow, and quiver on the table, likely weapons of Teumann, and an Egyptian-style necklace. The taking of these select objects proclaims and reasserts Assyria's power, with the consequence that two different themes have been conflated into one scene: the banquet of the royal couple and the display of trophies.[29] Paul Collins focused on the symbolism of the vegetation, by suggesting in particular that pine trees and date palms surrounding the royal couple may have respectively symbolized Assyria, since pine trees were native to Assyria, and fertility, since it was so conceived in the Mesopotamian tradition. Additionally, by reviewing Mesopotamian iconography, he further proposes that the fruiting date palm is a marker of femininity and the conifer tree symbol of masculinity.[30] More recently, following this line of thought, Ataç highlighted the vegetal symbolism and regeneration of the garden scene. Particularly, the grapevine has clearly connotations not

28 Albenda 1977, 44–45. See also Barnett 1976, 56; Collins 2004. The identification of this female-like figure as the queen has been questioned and scholars have proposed more allegorical and symbolic interpretations rather than historical (see Ataç 2018b, 156 for a reappraisal of previous studies).

29 Albenda 1977.

30 Collins 2004 and 2006.

only of fertility but also of regeneration and paradise. Quoting Ataç: "Along with the date palm, the olive, and the fig, the vine is one of the quintessentially symbolic plants of greater Mediterranean and Near Eastern geography, all of which had connotations not only of fertility but also possibly of regeneration and paradise. At a symbolic level, partaking of wine and possessing a magical flower held in the hand may be considered as life-giving activities, life again understood in its sense of eternal life or immortality."[31] He thus considers all the activities performed in the scene as life-giving activities. The investigation proceeds further as Ataç discusses the ambivalent nature of rule, power, wealth, and luxuriance through the complexities of royal or tyrannical power in ancient Greek literature and its topoi in the depiction of the ancient monarch or tyrant. The whole "garden scene" should be read accordingly as the ideal environment, an almost supernatural realm, with a number of indicators for an idealized bliss for Ashurbanipal, such as the date palm, the grapevine, possible wine drinking, and the company of a woman. Such a reality is defined by the author as "transcendent." However, the death and decay symbolized by the head of Teumman conveys the "transient" aspect of the entire scene, accentuated by the detail of the bird sweeping as if to swallow the locust, interpreted as Assyria's defeat of Elam.[32]

From this last point I should like to further the discussion by analysing the lotus flower held by the king, proceeding through an interpictorial analysis. In fact, the lotus flower is mostly found on reliefs of Tiglath-pileser III from his Central Palace at Kalhu and Sargon II from his royal palace at Dur-Sharrukin. A number of plants held by these kings appear and are variously described as blossoming flower with long leaves or triple flower of pomegranates or poppy heads. Clear evidence of the lotus flower is however found on a single relief of Tiglath-pileser III, who is shown on his chariot, and more extensively from Sargon II's reliefs at Dur-Sharrukin.[33] Afterwards, the surviving figurative programs of Sargon's successors do not show clear examples of similar plants as royal insigne, and the only instance we can refer to is this relief of Ashurbanipal. This suggests that the motif of the king holding the lotus flower was deliberately omitted for years and then readopted during Ashurbanipal's reign relying on examples coming from the reliefs of Kalhu and Dur- Sharrukin. In contrast to Kalhu, the royal palace of Sargon II at Dur-Sharrukin was abandoned after Sargon's death and the transfer of the capital city to Nineveh by Sennacherib, with the consequence that Dur-Sharrukin became a minor administrative centre.[34] Only a single text attests to the use of the capital in later times, in which Sargon's palace is apparently referred to as "old."[35] This textual evidence, together with the intericonical relation, might further support the hypothesis that Dur- Sharrukin was still used in the time of Ashurbanipal and some reliefs may have represented a source of inspiration for Ashurbanipal's artists.

31 Ataç 2018b, 161.

32 Ataç 2018b, 163–168.

33 See Portuese 2018, 101–102 for a review of the iconographic repertoire attesting to the use of the lotus flower as royal insigne.

34 McMahon 2013, 166.

35 SAA 5 282: 10; Kertai 2015, 109 footnote 125.

Thus, it seems that the motif of the king holding a lotus flower comes into fashion again in the times of Ashurbanipal. The question then is: was the meaning of the lotus flower reinterpreted? The significance of this plant was barely examined in previous scholarship. In his short monograph on the relationship between the king and the so-called Tree of Life in ancient Near Eastern religion, Geo Widengren addressed a general discussion on the power of the king to impart life to his subjects through his possession of the plant of life. The author relies on a number of textual and visual examples and swiftly interrogates sources of Neo-Assyrian period from which he draws the conclusive remark that the life may also have been communicated by the king through the inhalation of the scent of the plant. The so-called Tree of Life is not identified with a specific plant, but any iconographic reference showing the king holding a plant would indicate the Plant of Life and that the king is life's giver.[36] In a quite similar vein, in a recent article I suggested that, for its inherent properties, the lotus flower depicted as held by the king on a number of Neo-Assyrian reliefs well embodies the connotations of a magically ensured general notion of life and might accordingly be identified with the Plant of Life attested in Neo-Assyrian texts, as shown in the following example: "The king, my lord, has reared me from my childhood until the present day, and ten times has the king, my lord, taken my hand and saved my life from my enemies. You are a merciful king. You have done good to all the four quarters of the earth and [placed] the plant of life in their nostrils."[37]

My view is that the textual evidence of Neo-Assyrian period – especially royal letters – referring to the plant of life are subtly metaphorical: the writer moves from death to life and appeals to the Assyrian king, who represents the factual source of life. Life is metaphorically described by the action of placing the plant of life in the nostrils or mouth of the needy. Since metaphor is here defined as understanding one conceptual domain in terms of another conceptual domain, the scribes talk and think about life and rejuvenation (target domain) in terms of a plant (source domain) proffered to the needy. Therefore, the action of saving the life is partially structured, understood, performed and talked about in terms of offering the plant of life. In this light, I contend that the plant of life can be conceived as a conventionalized expression used to indicate the thaumaturgic powers of the Assyrian king capable of proffering protection and assistance to his subjects.

With this in mind, going back to the "garden scene" of Ashurbanipal I believe that the same conceptual metaphor of the lotus flower travelled through time: the king holding the lotus flower is positioned opposite the head of Teumman, that is to say that the life-giving ruler is the antithesis of the head of Teumman that symbolizes the death. Therefore, the whole scene must be seen as metaphor of regeneration, paradise and life, the ideal scenario for those who submit their own life to the Assyrian king. The entire composition is thus bipolar, or ambivalent using the words of Ataç, in that it is conceived as the showcase of two different statuses: the living and the dead. This is further emphasised by another conceptual type of metaphor, the orientational one. Everyone in the episode looks at the king, even the hanging head, which is by contrast turned upside-down. Following Megan

36 Widengren 1951, 20–41.

37 SAA 10 166: 6-r. 4. Portuese 2018.

Cifarelli, from Neo-Assyrian texts and pictures we learn that an upright posture was associated with dignity and correctness, and holding the head high perhaps indicated pride because, arguably, one could see the face of the king or god. This posture in fact was an element expressing reciprocity because implied an eye contact between figures of different rank. In sharp visual contrast, it seems that stooping, bending the neck, lowering the head figuratively expressed low status, humility, and submission. This posture boosted asymmetry and reduced reciprocity, limiting an eye contact with the king or god.[38] These social and cultural meanings lay down the basis for the orientational metaphors which have to do with the basic spatial orientation up-down. In fact, the status is correlated with (social) power and (physical) power is UP, while lower status is DOWN. Happiness, health, life, and control, the things that principally characterize what is good for a person, are all UP. Such an orientational metaphor basically tends to be bipolar and bivalent, where up has a positive value, while down tends to have a negative value. This is what the "garden scene" actually mirrors: the head of Teumann keeps looking at the king because Teumann himself is a king, but it is turned upside-down as to indicate that is dead.

In sum, the whole composition represents metaphorically the ambivalent or bipolar nature of life under the king's rule, which may be characterized by life and death. There are nuances of merciful and benevolent king's attitudes in the "garden scene", whose messages were most likely addressed in a rather concealed form to a restricted number of persons who could have access to the upper rooms of the palace and could correctly grasp the metaphorical meanings of the picture, which surely required a certain degree of knowledge to be understood.[39]

The Lion Hunt

The third case study is represented by the lion hunt depicted on the walls of Room C in the North Palace at Nineveh. The whole palace decoration seems to have been devoted to the royal hunt: Room C, conceived as a corridor, was at the end of a route which displayed hunting scenes (room S) and bodies of lions (corridor R). The fallen series from room S[1] showed the same theme as well.[40]

The episode in Room C is arranged according to a continuous narrative, with figures repeated over and over to express both movement and time of the narrative (fig. 3). The king is first represented outside the arena, in preparation for the hunt in the act of receiving the bow (slabs 4–6); then, he appears three times on his chariot, each time holding a

38 Cifarelli 1998, 215.

39 Once again, it seems that such a bipolarity as well as the often neglected paternalism of the Assyrian king are manifested in every epoch in the Neo-Assyrian art (for further analyses, see Portuese 2017 and 2019).

40 Kertai 2015, 184 suggests that the abundance of hunting scenes in the North Palace might reflect one of the purposes of the palace, that is to say that the palace itself may have been the setting for such hunts and associated ceremonies and celebrations.

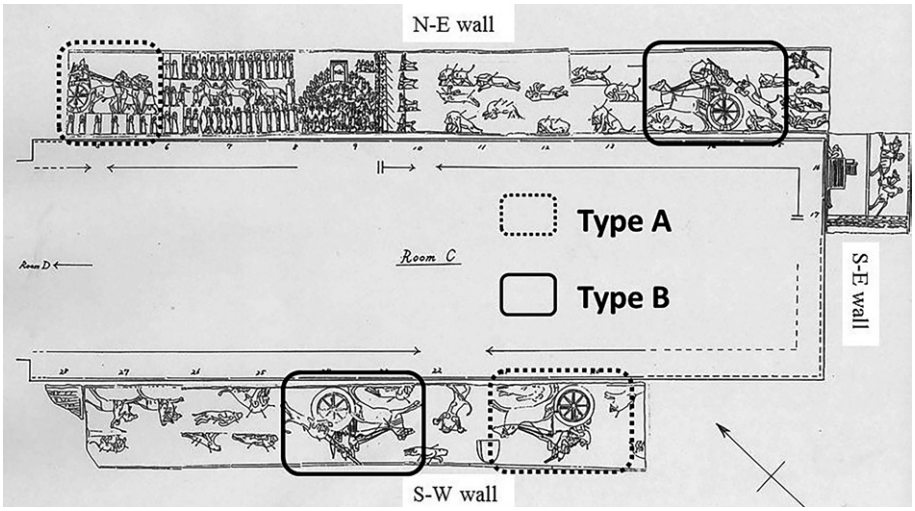


Fig. 3: Nineveh, North Palace, plan of Room C
(after Watanabe 2014: fig. 4; by courtesy of Prof. Dr. C. E. Watanabe)

different weapon: bow and arrows on the northeast wall (slabs 13–15), sword and lance on the southwest wall (slabs 20–25). The hunt starts on the left of the northeast wall, where the king prepares for the hunting activities; to the right is a wooded hill on which stands a royal stele depicting a miniature of the lion-hunt from a chariot (slab 9). To the right of the hill is depicted the actual action, where wounded lions move or face toward the left (fig. 4). They are struck by the arrows of the king, who shoots from his chariot with the bow. A lion already wounded, in particular, springs at it from the rear, only to fall transfixed by the spears of the king's two beardless attendants. Under the chariot rolls a dying lioness (slabs 11–15). The southwest wall shows two royal chariots facing each other, with the figure of a rampant lion between the two vehicles (fig. 5). The king on the chariot on the left thrusts a sword into the throat of the lion, and the king on the right holds a spear to pierce the lion, which has sprung onto the wheel of the chariot (slabs 20–25).

Unlike the above-described battle of Til-Tuba, the way the story develops is neither clearly indicated nor can a linear development of the narrative be traced. There is in fact no indication of the relative time or the location of the event or events taking place in the scene, and this perhaps suggests that the whole room may have displayed different stages of one event. In this respect, Chikako E. Watanabe suspects that the main aim of Room C's reliefs was not the depiction of the development of the story, but rather the glorification of the royal figure. However, she notes that the whole hunting scene is rather orbiting around the lions, which face and move in the direction of the next story and consequently represent the main protagonist of the scene, being the story narrated from the

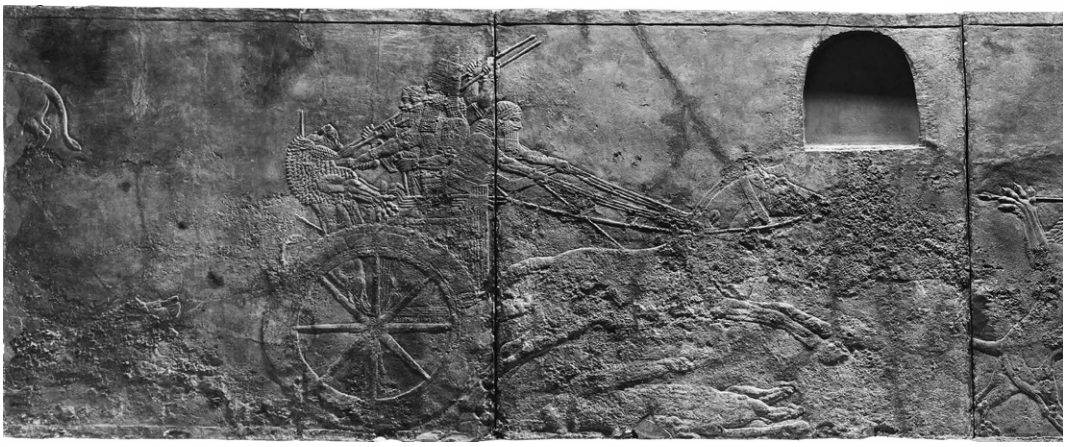
Fig. 4: Nineveh, North Palace, Room C, relief of Ashurbanipal, slabs 13–15.
British Museum, 124866-8 (© The Trustees of the British Museum)

point of view of the lion.[41] She discusses further the differences in the chariot crews and in the king's personal ornaments in each lion hunt, concluding that two different lion hunt events are integrated here, which were carried out at different times and possibly in different places.[42] Additionally, focusing on the centric arrangement applied to the lion hunt reliefs on the southwest wall where two chariots are about to crash into each other in a head-on collision, Watanabe notes that this compositional scheme is basically determined by symmetrical visual flows that face each other and are directed towards the centre of the scene. Such an arrangement – whose oldest example is represented by the reliefs of Ashurnasirpal II where the king appears twice facing a tree – is used to integrate different events in time and place in the same scene, as if these events are all taking place simultaneously.[43]

41 Watanabe 2008a,326–331.

42 Relying on the weapon the king uses to kill the lion, Watanabe 2014, 355 identifies three scenes: the sword scene, the lance scene and the bow and arrow scene.

43 Watanabe 2014. Nadali 2018, 213–217 also distinguishes two events in the Room C, respectively one on the eastern and north eastern wall and the other on the south western wall. However, he diverges from Watanabe's view on the symmetrical arrangement and rejects the comparison with Ashurnasirpal II's double figure at the side of the stylized tree, because the two groups differ from each other, with both kings and the two attendants looking backward as they are all involved in an action of defence. He rather argues for a narrative explanation of the apparent symmetry by asserting that the static incongruence is actually the synthesis and combination of circumstances occurring in the same space, the arena, but at different times. The consequence of this narrative device is that there is no precise or preferred itinerary to follow the story, but any viewer can experience a "work in movement" without visual restrictions of time and place. The lion in the middle would be thus a temporal marker, distinguishing the two on-going actions, a connection of the "two heterogeneous durations."



As for the meaning of the lion hunt, this has been carefully investigated by Watanabe who points out that, in general, Mesopotamian lion metaphors used in the royal context can be interpreted as means to elucidate the nature and aspects of the king in terms of specific animal features.[44] For instance, in the royal inscriptions Ashurnasirpal II is described with a number of epithets that glorify the king as praise-worthy, powerful, magnificent, foremost, virile, hero, warrior, but also as a lion, since the animal properties are well-suitable for the ideas related to such a king. In much the same way, the king Esarhaddon is described as merciless and brave in battle, whose walking is a Deluge and who acts as a fierce lion. The aggressiveness of the king and the devastating effect of the Deluge, in other words, are juxtaposed and compared to the ferocity of the lion, which can be uncontrollable as much as the king with his troops.[45] Additionally, Watanabe relates the lion

44 In respect to the relationship between the king and the lion in Mesopotamia, Elena Cassin (1981) was the first to carry out a systematic study on textual evidence by arguing that the lion was chosen for the king because the animal is the king of the wild. Besides the metaphorical implications of the lion hunt, Jülide Aker (2007) has identified in the entire relief program of Room C different qualities of workmanship, which reveals greater gradation directly correlated to physical and social distance of specific figures from the king. Thus, the various degrees of quality depended on the status of the figure represented, with the consequence that quality of the execution functioned as a deliberate ideological tool that articulated and enforced rank and social status. In this light, the lion hunt of Room C may have had also the role of conferring prestige upon those figures depicted and circumscribing them into a precise rank order.

45 Watanabe relies on Max Black's interaction theory of metaphor, according to which in the metaphorical statement the primary subject and the secondary are interactive, in the sense that the characteristics of the secondary subject and its associated implications are applied onto the primary.

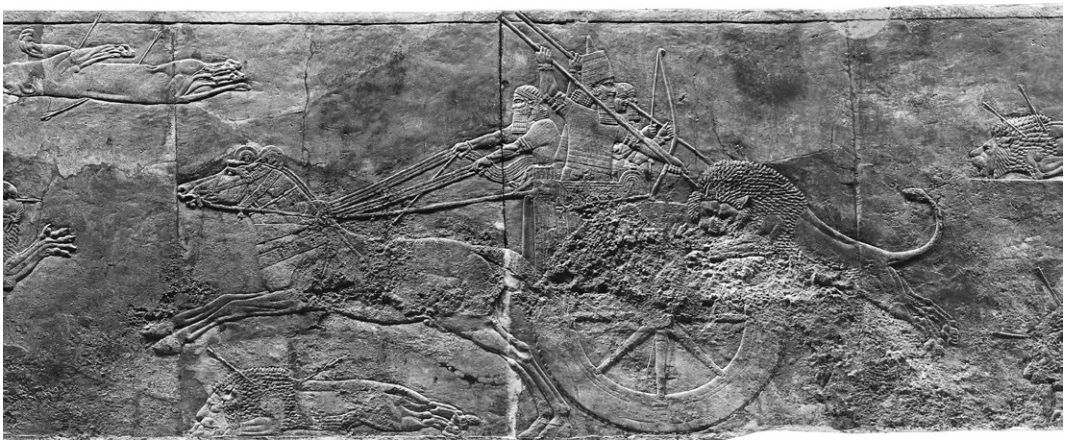


Fig. 5: Nineveh, North Palace, Room C, relief of Ashurbanipal, slabs 20–25. British Museum, 124850-1, 124852-5 (© The Trustees of the British Museum)

hunt with the Ninurta myth since the method of the royal lion hunt in Assyria, namely hunting from the chariot or on swift foot, corresponds to the two major means of representing Ninurta's victory. Thus, as much as Ninurta achieves his divine kingship by slaying monsters, the Assyrian king also establishes and reinforces his kingship by killing lions. This implies that the killing of the lion was a prerogative of the king and not allowed to anyone else, because the king was the only capable to subjugate the wild nature of the lion. In a sense, the king and the kingship controlled the order of society but also embodied the wild features of the lion at the moment of killing, that is to say its violent and mercilessness aspects against both animals and humans. The killing of the lions thus symbolized the prowess and power of the king to repel and ward off any evil force against the cultural order established in the civilized society ruled by the king.[46]

Having set out the premises on the Room C's decoration and the significance of the royal hunt in ancient Assyria, I turn now to the Image Metaphor theory and the interpictoriality to unveil further potential hidden meanings of the figurative program of Room C. The lion hunt as palace decoration emerges as a strong Assyrian tradition in the times of Ashurnasirpal II and Ashurbanipal – a gap of around two centuries. This aspect might be related to the fact that the cult of Ninurta was prominently exalted both in the reign of Ashurnasirpal II and Ashurbanipal. In fact, Ninurta was elected as principal god of Kalhu when Ashurnasirpal II rebuilt the city as new capital of Assyria; in addition, the Sumerian

Each element, furthermore, is also mutually influential on and influenced by the context (frame) of the metaphor (Black 1962). The introduction of this book discusses further Watanabe's work.

46 Watanabe 1998, 441–448.

version of the Ninurta myths were kept in the library of Ashurbanipal.[47] Since there are no lion hunts recorded on palace wall panels between the reigns of these two kings, it seems that Ashurbanipal, consciously adopted, re-used and re-interpreted this iconographic motif along, perhaps, with its metaphorical and cultural meanings. Particularly, one single episode of the hunt depicted in Room C, the hunting scene on the northeast wall (slabs 13–14, fig. 4), appears to be close in almost all aspects to the upper register of relief labelled B-19 coming from the throne room of the Northwest Palace of Ashurnasirpal II's at Kalhu.[48] Both scenes, besides showing the same thematic subject, are in fact structured in an isosceles triangle whose apex occurs above the conical headdress of the king: this structure relies on an imaginary triangle, the base of which rests upon the baseline of the register containing the composition and whose apex ends near the top of the same register.[49] A number of compositional differences however occur: i) the overall composition changes orientation, but the king's gaze always turns towards the left, in the direction of movement; ii) The number of lions increases, from one to eighteen (strategy of multiplication); iii) the soldiers are on the chariot, one of whom is beardless, and the lion being trampled by the chariot is a lioness (strategy of substitution) and lies on her back.[50] Overlooking these differences, one can readily assert that both scenes are interpictorially related: Ashurbanipal seems to have reintroduced an old motif that had fallen out of use for two centuries and, apparently, the meanings associated with it seems in no way changed. Nonetheless, from a pure metaphorical perspective there might be a slight divergence which can be detected from comparing the royal inscriptions of the two kings. Relying on texts, the straightforward statement "I am a lion"[51] occurs in Ashurnasirpal II's texts but it is absent in Ashurbanipal's texts. In this statement, the king is not stronger than a lion nor is like a lion, rather the king is a lion. This is reflected in the relief B-19 from the Northwest Palace, where the lion attacks the chariot and is positioned in equal posture with the king. According to the rules of the Image Metaphor theory, because the shape of a lion (source image) is not exactly the same as the shape of the king (target image), the shapes have been represented in a manner flexible enough to fit in an image mapping; that is, the shapes have been represented in a manner that is more topological than picture-like, topological in the sense of generalizing over specific geometric shapes. Such a device allowed artists to map the shape of the lion onto the king. In Ashurbanipal's texts, instead, there is no metaphorical description of the king in terms of a lion. In fact, the sentence referring to the relationship between the king and the lion "kings among mankind (and) lions among the animals could not grow powerful before my bow" associates the lions to the enemies and vice versa rather than to

47 *Ibid*., 441–442; *Ead*. 2002, 78–79.

48 Meuszyński 1981, pl. 2.

49 Albenda 1998, 19–20.

50 As mentioned above, according to the formalistic system of categorisation proposed by Heydemann, the strategy of substitution is the most frequent strategy of representation, whose main characteristic is the substitution of a figure, genre, materiality or style with another one (Heydemann 2015, 18).

51 RIMA 2 A.0.101.1: i33.

the king.[52] This is also visually expressed in the relief. In fact, on slabs 13–14 from Room C, the king is surrounded by a high number of lions which may stand for a high number of enemy kings; the lions before the king and the chariot do not attack but escape, thus they lose power, they cannot grow powerful, as happens in battle scenes from other reliefs of the North Palace.[53] Therefore, according again to the Image Metaphor theory, the mental image of the escaping lions (source image) is mapped onto the mental image of the escaping enemy (target image) rather than of the hunting king. In this sense, the number of the lions represented on these slabs acquires more significance: Elnathan Weissert has pointed out that the number of lions (eighteen) may correspond to the eighteen gates in the wall surrounding Nineveh; as a consequence, the pursued and killed lions evoke the harmful enemies at the eighteen city gates, with the king representing the protector of his people, the very good shepherd.[54]

In the light of this analysis what emerges is that both Ashurnasirpal II and Ashurbanipal's lion hunt are interpictorially related and clearly represent what we can refer to as image metaphors, where in one instance the shape and posture of the lion are mapped onto the king, in the other shape and posture of the lion are mapped onto the pursued and killed enemy. In both instances, the lion is always identified with the notion of kingship and the king's qualities. However, in Ashurbanipal's reliefs the king appears stronger than the lion and not like the lion, and the association with the king seems to have been even suppressed, because the lion's role as prey animal is more emphasised. The association with the king was simply pushed into the background. This apparent slight difference has major implications in the semantic of the decoration of Room C. The kind of image metaphor hitherto analysed may be valid for the slabs of the northeast wall of room C, but cannot be properly applied to the lion hunting episodes displayed on the slabs of the southwest wall. In fact, as much as Ashurnasirpal II's relief B-19, shape and posture of the lion (source image) depicted on slabs 20–25 (fig. 5) from Room C are mapped onto the king (target image): the image metaphors have their basis in and reflect physical similarity between the attacking lion and the attacking king, in order to identify the features of the king to those of the lion. Accordingly, on the southwest wall, the king is identified with the lion, while on the northeast wall the lion is identified with the enemy. This observation leads me to reappraise the composition of Room C. Although it seems reasonable the idea that two separate lion hunt events are amalgamated here, I believe that two different roles of the king and two different metaphors of the lion hunt were shown in the room: the northeast wall displayed the king as exemplar *shepherd*, who appears stronger than any wild force, able to hunt the enemy, ward off any evil threat, and protect his flock; the southwest wall exhibited the king and the lion as equal, that is to say as associated by the same features and qualities, thus the king was exalted on this wall as excellent *hunter*.

In sum, image metaphors allow us to understand that the multiple facets of significances attributed to the lion in the royal context were visually conveyed to the viewer

52 RINAP 5 9: i29.
53 See, for instance, Barnett 1976, pl. XXIII.
54 Weissert 1997, 350–356.

through the general shape of the lion mapped by artists onto the king. Moreover, what determines the exact meaning of the lion hunt is the context, which provides a frame for the metaphoric meanings to be expressed successfully.

Conclusions

The above discussed cases of transmission of specific motifs during the reign of Ashurbanipal plainly reveal the keen interest of this king in the past by the analysis and consequential active appropriation of old views, perceptions and ideas. But the variations or differences between source model and new result highlighted in the previous pages cannot be regarded as mistakes, since, in addition to being systematic, they were obviously intentional, and actually expressions of creativity. Ashurbanipal's artists, indeed, did not adopt and follow passively old thematic subjects to be applied onto new uses and demands: the reliefs analysed were neither copy, nor clumsy nor innovative imitation. As pointed out at the beginning of this work, the term interpictoriality does not imply any moral judgement, prejudice or estimation dictated by the old conceptions of *Kopienkritik* ("copy criticism").[55] I would rather argue that Ashurbanipal's art expressed a strong will for innovation but proportionally marked by archaism, through the study of models of the past and inspiration taken from them. The entangled link between archaism, or tradition, and creativity seems rather to have been a distinctive element of Ashurbanipal's art. The study of the meaning of images and pictures, and their related metaphors, shows in fact that when specific conceptual or image metaphors migrated through time processes of *inventio* were systematically adopted, with the consequence that past forms of expression underwent the praxis of re-interpretation of selected inspiring ancient models. Thus, the creativity of Ashurbanipal's art operated within the praxis or procedure of re-interpreting earlier works – in particular from the reign of Ashurnasirpal II – and their tradition and metaphorical meanings.

The reasons lying behind the choice of Ashurbanipal's artists of drawing inspiration from past examples can be apparently twofold. It is clear from texts, but also from reliefs, that Ashurbanipal acquainted himself with literature and science, including divination

55 At the end of the nineteenth and for more than a three-quarters of a century the so-called *Kopienkritik* was the dominant methodological approach to Roman sculptures, which treated as axiomatic the proposition that such sculptures consisted mostly of copies of Greek works by famous masters. This approach was later refined and scholars introduced terms like "free copy" and *Idealplastik* to designate sculptures that are not thought to be exact copies of a Greek model but are neoclassical works inspired by a number of earlier Greek compositions. Also terms from the Roman literature were then borrowed to describe the Roman sculpture. In particular, the literary *interpretatio* (direct translation of one source) was the 'exact' or 'true copy'; the *imitatio* (interpretation based on more than a source) was the 'free copy'; the *aemulatio* (a new work to compete with previous source works) was the 'ideal sculpture' (Gazda 2002, 4–8). It was arguably the principle of *aemulatio*, namely signs of innovation, that was ignored by the practitioners of the *Kopienkritik*, with the consequence that it made Roman art invisible (Perry 2005, 4, 78–84).

and mathematics.[56] He claims to have mastered Akkadian and even Sumerian, a dead language mostly restricted in use to highly qualified scholars.[57] It is known that he built up a comprehensive library in Nineveh, where he employed Assyrian and Babylonian scholars at his court and collected a number of tablets that had been owned by his predecessors: his broad aim was to unite all traditional written knowledge inherited from earlier times.[58] Thus, Ashurbanipal's profile appears more literate than most of his predecessors and was certainly very sensitive to the past. Besides this aspect, inspiration from past artistic expressions may have been led by other less evident explanations. There seems to have been a careful analysis and selection of old traditions, most likely driven by the scribal and intellectual group. Some motifs were certainly well-established in the Assyrian iconographic tradition, thus their "repetition" must be seen as a cultural Assyrian benchmark. However, Ashurnasirpal II in particular appears to have represented the most prominent model for later artists: for sure, the reiterated use of the Northwest Palace at Kalhu and the endless exposure of its interior decoration to any viewer of any epoch might have laid the foundation of a "copying" or inspirational phenomenon. The admiration for the glorious past of such an ancestor may have sparked a kind of "competitive race" with the consequence that any process of reinterpretation was sensitized and emboldened by an incipient mechanism of *aemulatio*.

To conclude, precisely because of this strong tradition, Ashurbanipal's period was hyperinterpictorial or was practiced in a hyper-interpictorial mode – paraphrasing Laboury – with the consequence that any copying and inspirational phenomenon was actually integral to the creative process itself.[59] Interpictoriality thus represents a very suitable tool to investigate the mechanism of "migrating images" along with "migrating metaphors." In fact, relying on the discussion in my introduction of the differences, at least in English and other modern languages, between picture – the material object – and image – the abstract thing – the interpictorial analysis I have presented points to the life and dynamism of images that survive in pictures. As a corollary, while pictures can be killed/destroyed, images survive.

Bibliography

Aker, J. 2007, "Workmanship as Ideological Tool in the Monumental Hunt Reliefs of Assurbanipal", in: J. Cheng – M.H. Feldman (eds), *Ancient Near Eastern Art in Context. Studies in Honor of Irene J. Winter by Her Students*, Culture and History of the Ancient Near East 26, Leiden/Boston: Brill, 229–263.

56 See, in particular, the detail of the stylus tucked into Ashurbanipal's belt on a relief from his North Palace (Taylor 2018, fig. 95).

57 RINAP 5 Ashurbanipal Assyrian Tablet 002: i13′ -i18′.

58 Fincke 2017; Finkel 2018, 82; Taylor 2018.

59 Laboury 2017, 254.

Albenda, P. 1977, "Landscape Bas-Reliefs in the Bīt-Ḫilāni of Ashurbanipal", *Bulletin of the American Schools of Oriental Research* 225, 29- 48.

—. 1998, *Monumental Art of the Assyrian Empire: Dynamics of Composition Styles*, Monograph of the Ancient Near East 3/1, Malibu: Undena Publications.

Arnheim, R. 1969, *Visual Thinking*, Berkeley, Los Angeles/London: University of California Press.

Ataç, M.-A. 2010, "'Time and Eternity' in the Northwest Palace of Ashurnasirpal II at Nimrud", in: A. Cohen – S.E. Kangas (eds), *Assyrian Reliefs from the Palace of Ashurnasirpal II: A Cultural Biography*, Hanover: Hood Museum of Art/Dartmouth College /University Press of New England, 159–180.

—. 2018a, "Identifying the big bird in the battle reliefs of Ashurnasirpal II", in: P. Attinger – A. Cavigneaux – C. Mittermayer – M. Novák (eds), *Text and Image. Proceedings of the 61e Rencontre Assyriologique Internationale, Geneva and Bern, 22–26 June 2015*, Orbis Biblicus et Orientalis 40, Leuven: Peeters, 43–51.

—. 2018b, *Art and Immortality in the Ancient Near East*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Barnett, R.D. – Falkner, M. 1962, *The Sculptures of Aššur-naṣir-apli II (883- 859 B.C.), Tiglath-pileser III (745–727 B.C.), Esarhaddon (681–669 B.C.) from the Central and South-West Palaces at Nimrud*, London: The Trustees of the British Museum.

Barnett, R.D. 1976, *Sculptures from the North Palace of Ashurbanipal at Nineveh (668–627 B.C.)*, London: British Museum Publications.

Belting, H.2001, *Bild-Anthropologie*: *Entwürfe für eine Bildwissenschaft*, München: Fink Wilhelm.

—. 2005, "Image, Medium, Body: a New Approach to Iconology", *Critical Inquiry* 31, 302–319.

Black, M. 1962, *Models and Metaphors: Studies in Language and Philosophy*, Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

Bonatz, D. 2004, "Ashurbanipal's Headhunt: An Anthropological Perspective", *Iraq* 66, 93–101.

Cassin, E. 1981, "Le roi et le lion", *Revue de l'Histoire des Religions* 198/4, 355–401.

Chéroux, C. 2010, *Diplopia. L'immagine fotografica nell'èra dei media globalizzati: saggio sull'11 settembre 2001*, Torino: Einaudi.

Cifarelli, M. 1998, "Gesture and Alterity in the Art of Ashurnasirpal II of Assyria", *The Art Bulletin* 80/2, 210–228.

Collins, P. 2004, "The Symbolic Landscape of Ashurbanipal", *Source: Notes in the History of Art* 23/3, 1–6.

—. 2006, "Trees and Gender in Assyrian Art", *Iraq* LXVIII, 99–107.

Dolce, R. 2018, *"Losing One's Head" in the Ancient Near East. Interpretation and Meaning of Decapitation*, London/New York: Routledge.

Fincke, J.C. 2017 "The Library of Ashurbanipal", in: L. Petit – D. Morandi Bonacossi (eds), *Nineveh, the Great City. Symbol of Beauty and Power*, Papers on Archaeology of the Leiden Museum of Antiquities 13, Leiden: Sidestone Press, 208–211.

Finkel, I. 2018, "Ashurbanipal's Library: Contents and Significance", in: G. Brereton (ed), *I am Ashurbanipal: king of the world, king of Assyria*, London: The Trustees of the British Museum/Thames&Hudson, 80–87.

Gamer, E-Ch. 2013, "Configurations of Emptiness: Intericonic Blanks in Louise Lawler's *A Movie Without the Picture* and Hiroshi Sugimoto's *Theaters*", in: C. Taban (ed), *Meta- and Inter-Images in Contemporary Visual Art and Culture*, Leuven: Leuven University Press, 115–131.

Gazda, E.K. (ed) 2002, "Beyond Copying: Artistic Originality and Tradition", *The Ancient Art of Emulation: Studies in Artistic Originality and Tradition from the Present to Classical Antiquity*, Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1–24.

Grayson, A. K. 1991, *Assyrian Rulers of the Early First Millennium BC I (1114– 859 BC)*, The Royal Inscriptions of Mesopotamia, Assyrian Periods 2, Toronto – Buffalo – London: University of Toronto Press.

Gunter, A.C. (ed) 1990, "Artists and Ancient Near Eastern Art", *Investigating Artistic Environments in the Ancient Near East*, Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution, 9–11.

—. 2019, "The 'Art' of the 'Ancient Near East', *A Companion to Ancient Near Eastern Art*, Hoboken: Wiley Blackwell, 1–21.

Heydemann, N. 2015, "The Art of Quotation. Forms and Themes of the Art Quote, 1990–2010. An Essay", *Visual Past* 2/1, 11–64.

Kertai, D. 2015, *The Architecture of Late Assyrian Royal Palaces*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Laboury, D. 2017, "Tradition and Creativity: Toward a Study of Intericonicity in Ancient Egyptian Art", in: T. Gillen (ed), *(Re)productive Traditions in Ancient Egypt, Proceedings of the conference held at the University of Liège, 6th–8th February 2013*, Liège: Presses Universitaires de Liège, 229–258.

Lakoff, G. – Johnson, M. 1980, *Metaphors We Live By*, Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

Lakoff, G. 1987, "Image Metaphors", *Metaphor and Symbolic Activity* 2/3, 219–222.

—. 2006, "The Neuroscience of Form in Art", in: M. Turner (ed), *The Artful Mind: Cognitive Science and the Riddle of Human Creativity*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 153–169.

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

Limont, W. 2014, "Conceptual Metaphor in Visual Art", in: C.M. Fossaluzza – I. Verstegen (eds), *Ragionamenti Percettivi: saggi in onore di Alberto Argenton*, Sesto San Giovanni: Mimesis, 73–82.

McMahon, A. 2013, "Space, Sound, and Light: Toward a Sensory Experience of Ancient Monumental Architecture", *American Journal of Archaeology* 117/2, 163–179.

Meuszyński, J. 1981, *Die Rekonstruktion der Reliefdarstellungen und ihrer Anordnung im Nordwestpalast von Kalḫu (Nimrūd). Räume: B.C.D.E.F.H.L.N.P.*, Baghdader Forschungen 2, Mainz am Rhein: Verlag Philipp von Zabern.

Mitchell, W.J. T. 2015, *Image Science: Iconology, Visual Culture, and Media Aesthetics*, Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press.

Nadali, D.2012, "Interpretations and Translations, Performativity and Embodied Simulation. Reflections on Assyrian Images", in: G.B. Lanfranchi – D. Morandi Bonacossi – C. Pappi – Pappi – S. Ponchia (eds), *Leggo! Studies Presented to Frederick Mario Fales on the Occasion of His 65th Birthday*, Leipziger Orientalische Studien 2, Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 583–595.

—. 2014, "Categorizing Images and Objects: Where and How Ancient Artefacts Might be Evaluated", in: P. Bieliński – M. Gawlikowski – R. Koliński – D. Ławecka – A. Sołtysiak – Z. Wygnańska (eds), *Proceedings of the 8th International Congress on the Archaeology of the Ancient Near East, 30 April – 4 May 2012, University of Warsaw, Volume 1: Plenary Sessions, Township and Villages, High and Low - The Minor Arts for the Elite and for the Populace*, Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 467–476.

—. 2018, "Timing Space / Spacing Time: Narrative Principles in Assurbanipal Hunt Reliefs of Room C in the North Palace of Nineveh", in: F. Pedde – N. Shelley (eds), *Assyromania and More, In Memory of Samuel M. Paley*, marru 4, Münster: Zaphon, 211–225.

Nadali, D. – Verderame, L. 2019, "Neo-Assyrian Statues of Gods and Kings in Context", *Altorientalische Forschungen* 46/2, 234–248.

Novotny, J. – Jeffers, J. 2018, *The Royal Inscriptions of Ashurbanipal (668-631 BC), Assur-etal-ilani (630–627 BC), and Sin-sarra-iskun (626–612 BC), Kings of Assyria, Part I*, The Royal Inscriptions of the Neo-Assyrian Period 5, University Park: Eisenbrauns.

Ornan, T. 2005, "A Complex system of religious symbols: The case of the winged disc in Near Eastern imagery of the first millennium BCE", in: C.E. Suter – Ch. Uehlinger (eds), *Crafts and Images in Contact: Studies on Eastern Mediterranean art of the first millennium BCE*, Orbis Biblicus et Orientalis 210, Fribourg/Göttingen: Academic Press Fribourg/Vandenhoeck&Ruprecht, 207–241.

Parpola, S. 1993, *Letters from Assyrian and Babylonian Scholars*, State Archives of Assyria 10, Helsinki: Helsinki University Press.

Pering, B. 1932–1933, "Die geflügelte Scheibe in Assyrien: Eine religionsgeschichtliche Untersuchung", *Archiv f*ür *Orientforschung* 8, 281–296.

Perry, E. 2005, *The Aesthetics of Emulation in the Visual Arts of Ancient Rome*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Portuese, L. 2017, "Concealed Paternalism of the Assyrian King: Which Audience?", *Mesopotamia* LII, 111–128.

—. 2018, "Metaphorical Allusions to Life-Giving Plants in Neo-Assyrian Texts and Images", *Antiguo Oriente* 16, 93–116.

—. 2019, "The Throne Room of Aššurnaṣirpal II: A Multisensory Experience", in: A. Hawthorn – A.-C. Rendu Loisel (eds), *Distant Impressions: The Senses in the Ancient Near East*, University Park: Eisenbrauns.

Postgate, N. – Reade, J.E. 1976–1989, "Kalḫu", *ReaIlexikon der Assyriologie* 5, 303–323.

Reade, J.E. 2011, "The Evolution of Assyrian Imperial Architecture: Political Implications and Uncertainties", *Mesopotamia* 46, 109–125.

Russell, J.M. 1999, *The Writing on the Wall. Studies in the Architectural Context of Late Assyrian Palace Inscriptions*, Mespotamian Civilization 9, Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns.

Shuttleworth, M. 2017, *Studying Scientific Metaphor in Translation: An Inquiry into Cross-Lingual Translation Practices*, New York: Routledge.

Taylor, J. 2018, "Knowledge: the Key to Assyrian Power", in: G. Brereton (ed), *I am Ashurbanipal: king of the world, king of Assyria*, London: The Trustees of the British Museum/Thames&Hudson, 88–97.

Von Rosen, V. 2011, "Interpikturalität", in: U. Pfisterer (ed), *Metzler Lexikon Kunstwissenschaft: Ideen, Methoden, Begriffe*, Berlin: Springer, 208–209.

Watanabe, C.E. 1998, "Symbolism of the Royal Hunt in Assyria", in: Jiři Prosecký (ed), *Intellectual Life in the Ancient Near East: Papers Presented at the Forty-Third Rencontre Assyriologique Internationale, Prague, July 1–5, 1996. Rencontre Assyriologique Internationale 43*, Praha: Oriental Institute, 439–450.

—. 2002, *Animal Symbolism in Mesopotamia: A Contextual Approach*, Wiener offene Orientalistik 1, Wien: Ferdinand Berger&Söhne.

—. 2008a, "The Classification of Methods of Pictorial Narrative in Assurbanipal's Reliefs", in: R.D. Biggs – J. Myers – M.T. Roth (eds), *Proceedings of the 51st Rencontre Assyriologique Internationale held at the Oriental Institute of Chicago, July 18–22, 2005*, Chicago: The University of Chicago, 321–331.

—. 2008b, "A Compositional Analysis of the Battle of Til-Tuba", in: H. Kühne – R.M. Czichon – F. Janoscha Kreppner (eds), *Proceedings of the 4th International Congress of the Archaeology of the Ancient Near East, 29 March-3April 2004, Freie Universität Berlin, Volume 1: The Reconstruction of Environment: Natural Resources and Human Interrelations through Time, Art History: Visual Communication*, Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 601–612.

—. 2014, "Styles of Pictorial Narratives in Assurbanipal's Reliefs", in: B.A. Brown – M.H. Feldman (eds), *Critical Approaches to Ancient Near Eastern Art*, Boston/Berlin: de Gruyter, 345–367.

Weissert, E. 1997, "Royal Hunt and Royal Triumph in a Prism Fragment of Ashurbanipal (82–5- 22,2)", in: S. Parpola – R.M. Whiting (eds), *Assyria 1995: Proceedings of the 10th Anniversary Symposium of the Neo-Assyria Text Corpus Project, Helsinki, September 7–11, 1995*, Helsinki: The Neo-Assyrian Text Corpus Project, 339–358.

Widengren, G. 1951, *The King and the Tree of Life in Ancient Near Eastern Religion*, King and Saviour IV, Uppsala/Wiesbaden: A.-B Lundequistska/Harrassowitz.

Winter, I.J. 1985, "After the Battle Is Over: The *Stele of the Vultures* and the Beginning of Historical Narrative in the Art of the Ancient Near East", in: H.L. Kessler – M.S. Simpson (eds), *Pictorial Narrative in Antiquity to the Middle Ages*, Washington D.C.: National Gallery of Art, 11–32.

The Significance of the Embrace Metaphor in the Inscription KARKAMIŠ A 21

Claudia Posani (Università degli Studi di Torino)

The aim of this paper is to identify the metaphorical significance of the embrace metaphor as it appears in the hieroglyphic Luwian inscription KARKAMIŠ A 21. To better understand the embrace metaphor, the analysis is carried out from both a textual and an iconographic perspective, also taking into account the embrace scenes that are widespread in the Hittite iconography of the II millennium BC (the so-called *Umarmungsszenen*). As a result, it is argued that the common translation of the royal title AMPLECTI-*mi*, which occurs in KARKAMIŠ A 21 § 1, as 'Loved' (by a deity), needs to be changed in 'Embraced' (by a deity).[1]

Introduction

Before focusing on the analysis of the metaphor, some preliminary considerations about the methodological approach to metaphors are required. An overall and detailed study of metaphors in the Near Eastern world in general has not yet been carried out. In regard to the Anatolian world, some recent studies are devoted to metaphors in Hittite historical texts and treaties.[2] With regard to hieroglyphic Luwian texts, some studies are devoted to literary *topoi*,[3] or to aspects of rhetoric of some specific inscriptions,[4] but research focused on metaphors in the Neo-Hittite Corpus has yet to be done.

Metaphor is indeed an extremely complex topic. Metaphors do not only represent linguistic processes, but also mental ones, and they are involved in the human knowledge of the world and in the way of representing it conceptually. As such, they arise from sensory

1 I am grateful to Ilya Yakubovich and to the organizers of the workshop "Researching Metaphor in the Ancient Near East: Perspectives from Texts and Images", Ludovico Portuese and Marta Pallavidini, for the useful suggestions they gave me when I presented this paper at the 65th Rencontre Assyriologique Internationale "*Gods, Kings and Capitals in the Ancient Near East*", Paris, on July 12th, 2019. All the responsibility for the content of this article is exclusively mine.

2 Pallavidini 2017 and 2018.

3 Cf. Simon 2011.

4 Cf. Payne 2015, 171–177.

representations, and are universally widespread. Some differentiations in the formation of metaphors could appear only secondarily, at a cultural level.

Moreover, metaphors connect mental images and linguistic structures: how this process happens, and which of these two symbolic structures is primarily involved in the formation of thought, is the subject of broad philosophical debate.

In the present analysis, the theoretical approach of the conceptual metaphor[5] is adopted: according to this approach, peculiar to cognitive linguistics,[6] the processes of thoughts themselves are already highly metaphorical and are at the basis of the mechanisms of knowledge. Accordingly to this approach, an attempt is therefore made in this paper to provide possible explanations of the extensions of meaning generated by the metaphorical mechanisms, in order to reconstruct which conceptual world emerges from the sources object of analysis and to better understand the cultures that produced them.

In addition, the peculiarity of the texts written in a hieroglyphic writing system should be underlined:[7] the visual aspect of the signs, in fact, may sometimes enrich the relationship between linguistic and imaginative levels, in the concentration proper to the word-image.

The Inscription KARKAMIŠ A 21

The inscription KARKAMIŠ A 21 is carved in relief on two adjoining basalt orthostats.[8] They were found *in situ* in the Great Staircase of Karkemiš, as part of the South-East wall of entrance to the Gatehouse, and were removed for dispatch to England. The orthostat *b* shows a damaged image of a ruler, probably Astirus II,[9] son of Sasturas. He is depicted facing right, with the left arm stretched out, clasping two rods in his hand. On the orthostat *a,* a 4-winged figure is carved. This too is represented facing right, and wears a short kilt with a long, fringed, embroidered over-skirt. This figure holds a siren-handled bucket in its right hand.

The execution of the high reliefs of the Gatehouse at the Great Staircase is very sophisticated.[10] In 1981, Orthmann assigned these reliefs to the „Späthethitisch IIIb" phase, specifically to the „Karkemiš V" style.[11] This implies a chronological attribution to about

5 Ervas and Gola 2016, 26–30.

6 Cognitive linguistics was created in the United States in the 1970s, mainly by George Lakoff, Ronald Langacker and Leonard Talmy: the publication, in 1980, of the book *Metaphors We Live By*, by G. Lakoff and M. Johnson, inaugurates a new approach to the study of metaphors (cf. Ervas and Gola 2016, 26).

7 See Marazzi 2010, 233–251.

8 Hawkins 2000, plates 48–49. For the following general information about the inscription (description, discovery, content) cf. Hawkins 2000, 157–159.

9 The name, reconstructed from the fragments associated with this text, could be Astiru: cf. fragment 1, l.1: *á-sa-ti-ru*; thus, this ruler could be identified with Astiru(was) II: cf. Hawkins 2000, 162, Frag. 1, l.1.

10 Gilibert 2011, 37.

11 Orthmann 1971, 35–36; Hawkins 2000, 79; Gilibert 2011, 37.

the middle of the 8th Century BC (but the problem of dating of the Astirus II sculptures is still open:[12] however, they can be dated to the middle or the end of the 8th Century BC). From a stylistic point of view, the association of the ruler's image with genius figures performing lustral rituals recalls Assyrian models;[13] the same also applies to the garment details and hairstyle. Already in 1972, S. Mazzoni[14] noted that some stylistic patterns, as those of the gryphon images originated in Assyria during the reign of Assurnasirpal II, appeared in the Neo-Hittite states according to the model developed in Assyria during the reign of Sargon II.

The 8-line inscription KARKAMIŠ A 21 is placed behind the ruler's figure; the text must have had an initial part on a lost element on the right; on the left the inscription continued on slab *a*, where only lines 5 to 8 are preserved. Obviously, the condition of the supports makes it difficult to read the text; nevertheless, some fragments related to the inscription enable to restore part of text.[15] Moreover, the forms and orthography of the signs are featured by late conscious archaism.[16]

The text represents a kind of "autobiography" of the author. His name and titles are followed by a section devoted to his promotion by his father, and by a section celebrating his promotion by the goddess Kubaba. Afterwards, one section mentions the benefits by the goddess Kubaba; the next two parts are devoted to the relationships between Kubaba and the ruler's ancestors and between Kubaba and the author. The last preserved section is incomplete, and makes reference to the author and his father.

Lexical analysis

§ 1 l.1[17] ...] HEROS *kar-ka-mi-sà*(URBS) *MA*$_{x}$(REGIO) REGIO. DOMINUS (DEUS)*ku*[+AVIS] AMPLECTI-*mi* ||
[I (am) ...] the Hero, the Country-Lord of the city Karkemiš and the Ma(lizi) (?)-land, beloved of Kubaba.

In his self-presentation, at § 1, line 1, the author is designated (DEUS)*ku*[+AVIS] AMPLECTI-*mi*: which Luwian word underlies the logogram AMPLECTI is not known. This logogram has been alternatively considered equivalent either to the verb *aza-* 'to love' -preceded by the determinative (LITUUS)-, or to the verb *wasa*(*nu*)- 'to be good, dear', used in this case as an alternative to the common logogram BONUS.[18] Currently,

12 See Hawkins, Tosun and Akdoğan 2013, 5.
13 Gilibert 2011, 37–38.
14 Mazzoni 1972, 193–194.
15 Hawkins 2000, 159, 162–163.
16 Hawkins 2000, 158–162; Gilibert 2011, 37.
17 Transliteration and translation according to Hawkins 2000, 160.
18 Cf. Hawkins 2000, 559 § 1.

the most accepted explanation is that the underlying verb form could be (LITUUS)*aza-* 'to love': consequently, AMPLECTI-*mi* should be translated as 'beloved'. An analysis of the following sections of the text can help to attempt a different explanation of this verb.

After the titles section, reference is made to the special relationship between the ruler and the goddess Kubaba: at § 3, line 3, according to the restoration provided by Fragment 2, line 1,[19] it is stated that the goddess "extended the hand (to) the hand."[20] This part of the text is placed exactly in correspondence with the representation of the hand of the ruler, producing a sort of visual "joke." In fact, the two words employed for 'hand', written respectively in phonetic form and as logogram with phonetic complement, surround the image of the hand of the author, which is clearly visible in the centre, near the name of Kubaba.

Furthermore, at § 5, line 5, it is also possible to restore the second line of Fragment 2 *wa/i-ta* OMNIS-*mi* before the verb AMPLECTI-*nú-ta*, with a short lacuna in between. The resulting translation of this clause should then be "And all [...] she caused to embrace [me(?)]", followed by § 6, "who (were) not dear to me." Thus, at §§ 5–6 reference is made to the excellent relationships established by Kubaba[21] between the ruler and those who were previously hostile to him.

§ 3 l.3	[[...]][22] (MANUS)]*i-sa-ta*[*ra/i*[2]]-*na*[23] (DEUS)*ku*+AVIS MANUS-*tara/i ARHA i*+*a-t*[*á*
§ 4 l.4	... || ...]*190.THRONUS *tá-ti mi-i za*$_4$*-la* SOLIUM-*nú-tá*
§ 5 l.5	*wa/i-ta* OMNIS-*mi*[24] ||[...]AMPLECTI-*nú-ta*
§ 6 l.5	NEG+*a-pa-wa/i-mu* REL-*zi* BONUS[...]
	Kubaba ... extended[25] the hand to the hand,[26] [and me(?)] she(?) caused to sit on my paternal throne. And all [...] she(?) caused to embrace [me(?)], who (were) not dear to me.

The subject and the object of the action of embracing in this sentence are not syntactically clear.[27] The sense should be the following: thanks to the goddess, the ruler can now

19 On the joints to § 3 and § 5 given by fragment 2: cf. Hawkins 2000, 162–163.

20 The syntactical case of the name of Kubaba is not clear, so the text can also be translated "He (the author's father) extended (my) hand to Kubaba's hand": cf. Yakubovich EDIANA, visited on 2020–01–11.

21 Accepting the reasonable hypothesis that Kubaba is the subject of the proposition in § 5.

22 To avoid confusion between incomplete quotations and broken/missing and restored signs, incomplete quotations are marked by two square brackets [[...]], broken/missing and restored signs are marked by singles square brackets [...].

23 (MANUS)]*i-sa-ta*[*ra/i*[2]]-*na*: the word is preserved in Fragment 2, line 1: cf. Hawkins 2000, 163 § 3.

24 *wa/i-ta* OMNIS-*mi*: this part of text is preserved in Fragment 2, line 2: cf. Hawkins 2000, 163 § 5.

25 For the meaning of the verb, cf. Yakubovich EDIANA, visited on 2020–01–11.

26 Or: "[He] extended (my) hand to Kubaba's hand": cf. Yakubovich EDIANA, visited on 2020–01–11.

27 Melchert seems to prefer the interpretation according to which the king is the object of the action: cf. Melchert 2011, 78–79.

embrace those who were not dear to him, or they can embrace him. Reasonably, the text is meant to convey the idea of a king that embraces the inhabitants of Karkemiš in a protective way, as the goddess embraces and protects him.

The verb in this clause is normally translated as 'to embrace' (with causative force) and I agree that such a translation is more relevant in this context than a generic 'to love'. In addition, I think that this translation should also be applied to the title in § 1, especially since there does not seem to be any relation between the verb *aza-* and the logogram AMPLECTI (as argued by Marazzi in 1990[28] and confirmed by Gerard in 2004[29]). In fact, the participle *azamis* requires the name of the deity in ablative-instrumental case, whereas AMPLECTI-*mi* requires the name of the deity in genitive case.

In KARKAMIŠ A 21 § 1, the name of the goddess Kubaba is only partially complete, but it seems that it has no specific case ending.

In KARKAMIŠ A 13c § 1, the participle AMPLECTI-*mi*[...] is preceded by the genitive form (DEUS)*ku*-AVIS-*s*[*a*²]: according to Hawkins,[30] the use of genitive instead of ablative may demand a restoration of the word SERVUS after the participle AMPLECTI-*mi-sa*. This restoration is based on the comparison with § 1 of the BEIRUT bowl, where the genitive of the god Santas is followed by the participle AMPLECTI-*mi-sa* and by the noun SERVUS-*la/i*. However, the presence in KARKAMIŠ A 13c § 1 of a sign interpreted as the personal marker after the participle is in contrast with the proposed restoration.

In the archaic inscription KIZILDAG 4 § 1 the use of a mostly logographic script makes it impossible to identify any morphological aspect.

For syntactical reasons, and taking into account the stylistic patterns of the text in which the same verb occurs two times, I would then consistently prefer to translate the title of the ruler as 'embraced' by Kubaba instead of as 'beloved' of Kubaba.

Furthermore, from a semantic perspective, the verb 'to embrace' seems to have a concrete sense and a strong visual power which cannot be found in the abstract translation 'to love'. Besides, the embrace scene is of ancient literary origins: an extraordinary example is offered in the Epic of Gilgameš, when the hero and Enkidu embrace each other after fighting. At the level of imagery, the embrace scenes are characterized by strong bodily intensity, which should not to be lost in the translation. Thus, to better understand the value of the metaphorical expression in analysis, comparison with iconographic embrace scenes of the Hittite Empire period may provide further elements.

28 Marazzi 1990, 94.
29 Gerard 2004, 306–307.
30 Hawkins 2000, 168 § 1.

Umarmungsszene

A summary of the embrace scenes represented on Hittite seals and reliefs is provided below.[31]

In one of his seals, Muwatalli II is depicted embraced by the Storm-God of Heaven.[32]

In the seal impressions on the bullae of Nişantepe, the *tuḫkanti* Urḫi-Teššub is depicted embraced by Šarruma.[33] This is the only variant of the embrace scene, featuring a *tuḫkanti*: this kind of innovation can be explained by the Muwatalli II's political will to ensure the throne for his son, as convincingly argued by S. Herbordt.[34] Once becoming king, Urḫi-Teššub / Mursili III appears on a seal embraced by the Storm-God.[35]

Tutḫaliya IV is often depicted as embraced by a deity: in the seal impression RS 17.159, the king Tuthaliya (most probably Tuthaliya IV) is embraced by the Storm-God,[36] in the seal impressions on the Nişantepe *bullae* Tuthaliya (again, most probably Tuthaliya IV), appears as embraced by a deity.[37] In the famous relief of room B of Yazilikaya, he is embraced by the god Šarruma.[38]

The *Umarmungsszene*, as well as the king's garments, which often resemble those of the gods, have been interpreted as ways of emphasizing the religious role of the king and his special relationship with the deity.[39]

Not all scholars recognize the abovementioned scenes as *Umarmungsszenen*.[40] Klengel's analysis, in particular, discusses the features of the peace treaty stipulated between Hattusili III and Ramses II: the Egyptian version of this treaty contains a description of the seal impressions on the silver tablet sent to the Pharao by Hattusili III. In the middle of the *recto* and of the *verso* of the tablet, the seal impressions represented Hattusili III embraced by the Storm-God and his wife Puduhepa embraced by the Sun goddess of Arinna.[41]

The Egyptian term designating this embrace *-qnj-* refers to an action with both arms, which could be performed by both partners. As highlighted by the scholar, Egyptians could conceive a real embrace between a divine partner and the Pharao, since the Pharao

31 On all the mentioned scenes and for a detailed discussion on their interpretation, see de Martino 2010 (in particular 88–91), with further bibliography.

32 See Singer 2006, 50 fig. 6; Herbordt 2006, 208 fig. 134.

33 See Herbordt 2005, 71 fig. 46 a-d.

34 Herbordt 2005, 69–71.

35 See Singer 2006, 57 fig. 21.

36 See Ensert 2006, 108 fig. 1a.

37 See Herbordt 2006, 207 fig. 130–131; 208 fig. 133.

38 See Singer 2006, 50 fig. 7.

39 On this topic see de Martino 2010.

40 See Klengel 2002, 208–209. G. Paradiso makes a distinction between the embrace scenes and scenes related to the gesture of holding by the hand. She considers the "holding by the wrist" a variant of the latter, but in fact considers the seal impression of Muwatalli II, those of Urḫi-Teššub/Mursili III and the relief of Tuthaliya IV in Chamber B of the Yazilikaya sanctuary as representative of both categories (Paradiso 2019, 147–148).

41 Devecchi 2015, 54.

was considered a deity,[42] but this was unacceptable in the Hittite world. In Klengel's opinion, the Hittite iconography does not represent an embrace, but only a scene in which the god holds the king by the hand (more precisely by his wrist). Doing so, the deity puts his arm around the shoulders of the king: thus, it could seem to be an embrace scene, but the focus is put on the hand. At a symbolic level, this gesture implies that the god guides and protects the king. Accordingly, Klengel argues that the written sources confirm this interpretation, since the expression "hold by the hand" occurs often in the texts, starting from Mursili II' kingdom (the expression being particularly emphasized in the so-called "Autobiography" of Hattusili III).[43]

In my opinion, Klengel's analysis could be partially revised, since the gesture of the deity surrounding the person of the king with his arm, even without reciprocity, has its own strong value.

However, to return to the Neo-Hittite world and to the metaphor in analysis, when hieroglyphic Luwian texts convey the image of raising the king by the hand (e.g. in KARKAMIŠ A23 §3, where it is stated that the goddess Kubaba "raised by the hand" the king Katuwas) the logogram AMPLECTI is not used. Conversely, the inscription KARKAMIŠ A21 first provides an expression related to the hand (§ 3), and after one expression related to the action of embracing (§ 5 [...]AMPLECTI-*nú-ta*). Thus, to better understand the metaphor in question, some further elements can be provided by the subsequent clauses of the inscription in analysis.

Textual Metaphor in Context

After a section devoted to Kubaba and the ancestors, we find at § 10 another metaphor:

§ 10 l.7[44]	*wa/i-ma-sa tá-ti i-zi* and she became (a) father to me.

This metaphor recalls that in § 6 of ÇINEKÖY inscription:[45]

§ 6	|REL-*p*[*a*]-*wa/i-mu-u* |*su+ra/i-wa/i-ni-sa*(URBS) |REX-*ti-sá* |*su+ra/i-wa/i-za-ha*(URBS) |DOMUS-*na-za* |*ta-ni-ma-za* |*tá*-[*ti-sa* MATER-*sa-ha*] (||) *i-zi-ia-si* And so the king of the Assyrians and the entire house of Assur became fa[ther and mother] to me.

42 Klengel 2002, 206.
43 Klengel 2002, 208–210.
44 Cf. Melchert 2011, 78.
45 Transliteration and translation according to Payne 2012, 42–44.

A similar pattern occurs also in KARATEPE 1,[46] § 3 and § 18:

§ 3Hu 12–17 *wa/i-mu-u* (DEUS)TONITRUS-*hu-za-sa á-TANA-wa/i-*
||*ia*(URBS) MATER-*na-tí-na tá-ti-ha i-zi-i-tà*
§ 3Ho 12–17 *wá/i-mu* [...]-*za-sa* [...
Tarhunzas made me mother and father to Adanawa.[47]

§ 18Hu 85–94 [... || ...] |[*i-zi*]-*i*-[*ta*] |*á*-[*mi*]-*ia-ti* |IUSTITIA-*na-ti* |*á-mi-ia+ra/i-ha* |("COR")*á-ta-na-sa-ma-ti* |*á-mi-ia+ra/i-há* || |("BONUS")*sa-na-wa/i-sa-tara/i-ti*
§ 18Ho 85–94 |OMNIS-*MI-sa-ha-wa/i-mu-ti-i* REX-*ti-sa* |*tá-ti-na* |*i-zi-tà* |*á-mi-tí*|IUSTITIA-*na-ri+i* |*á-mi-ia+ra/i-há* |"COR$^{<">}$-*ta-na-sa-ma-ri+i* |*á-mi+ra/i-ha* |("BONUS")*sa-na-wa/i-sa-tara/i-tí*
And every king made me his father because of my justice and wisdom and goodness.

Another similar metaphor occurs also in KULULU 4, § 11:

§ 11 l.3[48] OMNIS-*ma-si-sa*$_4$-*ha-wa/i-mi tá-ti-sa*$_4$ *á-sa*$_8$-*ha*
And I was every man's father.

All these metaphors are strongly linked with the concept of family and protection (expressed by a scheme from top to bottom). As a father is disposed towards a son, so are the deities towards the king (KARKAMIŠ A21), the Assyrian king towards the subordinate ruler (ÇINEKÖY), the ruler towards the country and, of course, its inhabitants (KARATEPE 1), the king's servant towards the other men (KULULU 4). Conversely, in KARATEPE 1, § 18, the parental relationship is established between Azatiwatas and the other kings (who theoretically were superior to him). In this case, the rhetorical pattern is aimed at emphasizing the exceptional nature of Azatiwatas and his extraordinary moral skills (in fact, the text attributes the 'choice' *in toto* to the kings themselves: "And every king made me for himself a father ... ").

Furthermore, when reference is made to a deity, it is clearly aimed at expressing legitimacy: in the case of the inscription in analysis, as in the inscription KARATEPE 1 § 3, this legitimacy is 'internal': namely, it comes from a national divinity.[49]

Continuing with the analysis of KARKAMIŠ A21, §§ 11–12[50] seem to concern the growing up of the author of the inscription:

46 Transliteration and translation according to Payne 2012, 20–42.
47 According to the traditional reading of the place name (since it is not the purpose of this paper to get into the broad and still open discussion about this topic).
48 Transliteration and translation according to Hawkins (Hawkins 2000, 445).
49 Lanfranchi 2007, 207.
50 Transliteration according to Hawkins (Hawkins 2000, 160).

§ 11 ll.7–8 *wa/i-mu* INFANS-[x] REL-*ti* || |⌜(x)⌝*ti-i+a-ta*
§ 12 l. 8 MAGNUS-*i+a*[... REL[?]...]
and she (Kubaba) watched over me like a child,[51] adult...

Unfortunately, the fragmentary condition of the text makes it impossible a complete our understanding of this passage. However, the text seems to offer a further childhood and protection image, expressed by a rhetorical pattern linked with the passage of time and growing up. In this case, the divine protection shown towards the king when he was a child seems to be repeated in his adulthood. The king is accompanied by the protective glance[52] of the goddess throughout his life. Once more, the relationship between the king and the goddess is expressed by bodily and sensory images.

Conclusions

According to the previous discussion, it is possible to develop some observations. In fact, some thematic links can be found between the images suggested by the text.

First, both the expressions at § 10 and at § 11 "and she became (a) father to me and watched over me like a child" are connected with the topic of parenthood.

Second, there is a link between the title which occurs at § 1, (DEUS)*ku*[+AVIS] AMPLECTI-*mi*, that in my opinion should be translated as "embraced by Kubaba", and the verb which occurs at § 5, AMPLECTI-*nú-ta*: in the latter, the subject and the object of the action are not clear. If one accepts that the subject is the king, then he embraces Karkemiš' inhabitants, perhaps even his opponents, in the same way as the goddess embraces him. In any case, the embrace image seems to be used to express a protective metaphor. Additionally, at an imaginary level, it is difficult to imagine such an embrace scene, involving the king and many people, differently than acted with both arms.

The conscious employment of the same images at § 1 and § 5 serves the purpose of providing a specific idea of what a king must be: the "perfect" king must act towards his subjects as the deity acts towards him, namely, he must act as a reflex of the deity, most of all protecting his subjects and taking care of them. The underlying idea of kingship is that the king is in the middle between gods and humans, as represented in the seals and reliefs of the late Hittite Empire period.

Taking into account this metaphoric meaning of the iconographic embrace scenes, and the observations made about the use of specific stylistic patterns in KARKAMIŠ A 21 inscription, I think that the title AMPLECTI-*mi* has a peculiar visual force which should distinguish it from a generic meaning like 'loved'.

51 As concerns the translation of § 11 cf. Melchert 2011, 78.

52 On the proposal to identify the determinative logogram (OCULUS) in the damaged sign that precedes the verb *ti-i+a-ta*, cf. Hawkins 2000, 161–162, § 11.

Bibliography

de Martino, S. 2010, "Symbols of Power in the Late Hittite Kingdom", in: Y. Cohen – A. Gilan – J.L. Miller (eds), *Pax Hethitica. Studies on the Hittites and their Neighbours in Honour of Itamar Singer*, Studien zu den Boğazköy-Texten 51, Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 87–98.

Devecchi, E. 2015, *Trattati internazionali ittiti,* Brescia: Paideia.

Ensert, H.K. 2006, "Is the Small God Figure in the Seal Impression of Tudkhaliya IV, RS 17.159, Murshili II?", *Anadolu / Anatolia* 30, 93–109.

Ervas, F. – Gola, E. 2016, *Che cos'è una metafora*, Roma: Carocci.

Gerard, R. 2004, "Louvite hiéroglyphique *aza-* «aimer»", in: M. Mazoyer – O. Casabonne (eds), *Antiquus Oriens. Mélanges offerts au Professeur René Lebrun* (Vol. 1), Collection KUBABA, Série Antiquité V, Paris: Harmattan, 305–323.

Gilibert, A. 2011, *Syro-Hittite Monumental Art and the Archaeology of Performance. The Stone Reliefs at Carchemish and Zincirli in the Earlier First Millennium BCE*, Topoi: Berlin Studies of the Ancient World, Berlin/New York: de Gruyter.

Hawkins, J.D. 2000, *Corpus of Hieroglyphic Luwian Inscriptions. Vol. 1. Inscriptions of the Iron Age,* Berlin/New York: de Gruyter.

Hawkins, J.D. – Tosun, K. – Akdoğan, R. 2013, "A New Hieroglyphic Luwian Stele in Adana Museum", *Höyük* 6, 1–13.

Herbordt, S. 2005, *Die Prinzen- und Beamtensiegel der hethitischen Großreichszeit auf Tonbullen aus dem Nişantepe-Archiv in Hattusa. Mit Kommentaren zu den Siegelinschriften und Hieroglyphen von J. David Hawkins*, Boğazköy-Ḫattuša 19, Mainz am Rhein: Philipp von Zabern.

—. 2006, "The Hittite Royal Cylinder Seal of Tuthaliya IV with *Umarmungsszene*", in: P. Taylor (ed), *The Iconography of Cylinder Seals*, London/Turin: Warburg Institute/Nino Aragno, 82–91, 153–155, 207–211.

Klengel, H. 2002, "'An der Hand der Gottheit'. Bemerkungen zur 'Umarmungsszene' in der hethitischen Tradition", in: P. Taracha (ed), *Silva anatolica: Anatolian Studies Presented to Maciej Popko on the Occasion of His 65th Birthday*, Warsaw: Agade, 205–210.

Lanfranchi, G.B. 2007, "The Luwian-Phoenician Bilinguals of Çineköy and Karatepe: an Ideological Dialogue", in: R. Rollinger – A. Luther – J. Wiesehöfer (eds), *Getrennte Wege? Kommunikation, Raum und Wahrnehmung in der Alten Welt*, Oikumene. Studien zur antiken Weltgeschichte 2, Frankfurt am Main: Verlag Antike, 179–217.

Marazzi, M. 1990, *Il geroglifico anatolico. Problemi di analisi e prospettive di ricerca*, Roma: Università "La Sapienza".

—. 2010, "Scrittura, percezione e cultura: qualche riflessione sull'Anatolia in età hittita", *KASKAL* 7, 219–255.

Mazzoni, S. 1972, "Sui rilievi di Karkemish dall'età di Sargon II al 605 av. Cr.", *Rivista degli studi orientali* 47/ 3–4, 177–210.

Melchert, H.C. 2011 "Enclitic Subject Pronouns in Hieroglyphic Luvian", *Aramazd. Armenian Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 6/2, 73–86.

Orthmann, W. 1971, *Untersuchungen zur späthethitischen Kunst*, Bonn: Habelt.

Pallavidini, M. 2017, "Political Metaphors in Hittite Diplomatic and Historiographic Texts", *BAF-Online: Proceedings of the Berner Altorientalisches Forum*, 1. https://doi.org/10.22012/baf.2016.11.

—. 2018, "On the Diplomatic Function of Some Metaphorical Expressions Related to the Semantic Field of Sight in the Hittite International Treaties", *Res Antiquae* 15, 125–136.

Paradiso, G. 2019, "I gesti nelle rappresentazioni iconografiche ittite tra il XVI e il XIII secolo a.C.", *Asia Anteriore Antica. Journal of Ancient Near Eastern Cultures* 1/1, 143–158.

Payne, A. 2012, *Iron Age Hieroglyphic Luwian Inscriptions*, Atlanta: SBL Press.

—. 2015, *Schrift und Schriftlichkeit. Die anatolische Hieroglyphenschrift*, Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz.

Simon, Z. 2011, "Hethitische Topoi in der hieroglyphen-luwischen Historiographie", in: M. Hutter – S. Hutter-Braunsar (eds), *Hethitische Literatur. Überlieferungsproszesse, Textstrukturen, Ausdrucksformen und Nachwirken : Akten des Symposiums vom 18. bis 20. Februar 2010 in Bonn*, Alter Orient und altes Testament 391, Münster: Ugarit Verlag, 227–243.

Singer, I. 2006, "The failed reforms of Akhenaten and Muwatalli", *The British Museum Studies in Ancient Egypt and Sudan* 6, 37–58, available at http://www.thebritishmuseum.ac.uk/bmsaes/issue6/singer.html.

Yakubovich EDIANA = Yakubovich, I. (ed), *Provisional Annotation of the Hieroglyphic Luwian Corpus,* URL: https://www.ediana.gwi.uni-muenchen.de/corpus.php (last visited 2020–01–11).

Metaphors and Conceptual Metaphors in the Mesopotamian Medical Texts

Silvia Salin (Università degli Studi di Verona)

Introduction

In general, it might be said that medical metaphors are meant to express pain – both physical and emotional – by relating concepts, objects or social experiences either with the sick body (or some of its parts) or with illness in general. In other words, they have the purpose of render understandable to the others the pain felt by the patient, basing their words on bodily experience. Defined by the Italian anthropologist G. Pizza as a "social action",[1] metaphor "uses everyday language – inadequate to express the suffering body – in order to place the sick person in his (or her) social context."[2]

The use of metaphors in medicine is well attested for many cultures, past and present. As far as ancient Mesopotamia is concerned, it might be said that, in contrast to what happens in literary texts, in the medical ones we can find just a few metaphors *per se*. If anything, the cuneiform tablets relating to medicine offer what have been called by linguists G. Lakoff and M. Johnson as conceptual metaphors.[3] In their opinion, they are part of everybody's daily life, and belong to our language, thoughts and actions. Indeed, these scholars explain mind and meaning as embodied, and metaphors as representing the linguistic expression of "pre-conceptual image schemata" of our society. Although Mesopotamian medical texts – both therapeutic and diagnostic – should be considered as sort of handbooks written by and for professionals – whose purpose was to make available to the healers (*asû e āšipu*) a large series of signs and symptoms, recipes and rituals useful for curing the patient, and not to express the suffering and pain of the victim – they offer a copious amount of conceptual metaphors, which should be considered as the mirror of many aspects of the Assyro-Babylonian culture.

The purpose of this paper – part of a wider study concerning terms and expressions describing individual suffering in ancient Mesopotamia – is to offer an overview of the most interesting metaphors and conceptual metaphors by examining in particular the

1 See Pizza 2011.
2 Salin 2018, 196.
3 See Lakoff and Johnson 1980.

Assyro-Babylonian medical texts, dating back to the end of the II and the first half of the I millennium BCE.

Metaphors and Conceptual Metaphors on Pain

Pain is generally one of the first features considered by the medical professionals in order to recognize what kind of disease is affecting the patient; it could be of many and various kinds, be either constant or sporadic, and have different degrees of intensity. It has been defined by *The International Association for the Study of Pain* as "an unpleasant sensory and emotional experience associated with actual or potential tissue damage, or described in terms of such damage."[4] Aware of the impossibility to share personal pain with another human being, anthropologists have underlined the huge distance between those who actually feel pain and the others.[5] Indeed, "to feel the same pain as another would require that we became that person, which is of course impossible."[6] Nonetheless, the sufferer needs to communicate his (or her) pain, be it of physical or emotional nature, and he does it through the use of stories. These stories are normally full of metaphors, whose purpose is to tell, explain and interpret the pain he (or she) feels, and "sono sempre prese in una triangolazione fra dimensione individuale, dimensione sociale e processo storico."[7] Basing their words on bodily experience, these particular figures of speech render understandable to the others what is usually unintelligible, because of its subjective nature.

As already mentioned in the introduction of this paper, despite the difficulty of expressing pain, metaphors *per se* relating to pain are not frequently used in Mesopotamian medical tablets. As far as I know, some of the few examples of this kind might be found in those therapeutic texts concerning the stinging (or piercing) pain:

> (1) DIŠ NA *di-ik-šá* TUKU-*ma ki-ma ṣil-le-e ú-dàk-k*[*as-su*][8] ŠU.GIDIM.MA
> If a man has a piercing pain and it stings him like a thorn, "Hand of ghost."[9]

In the last example the type of pain perceived by the patient is clearly explained by the metaphor "it stings him like a thorn", using the verb *dakāšu* ('to sting') and the noun *ṣillû* ('thorn').

4 For an in-depth analysis cf. http://www.iasp-pain.org/Taxonomy.

5 Among others, see, for instance, Allué 1999, 119: "Nous pouvons, peut-être, partager la souffrance des gens que nous aimons, nous pouvons angoisser et nous sentir impuissants face à la souffrance d'autrui parce que nous ne pouvons rien faire pour les soulager. Mais pour saisir l'intensité de la douleur de l'autre, il faut devenir l'autre. (...). Il est impossible de partager la douleur physique. Cette douleur-là est personnelle et non partageable."

6 Salin 2018, 196.

7 Pizza 2011, 103.

8 For a different interpretation see the BabMed website : http://www.geschkult.fu-berlin.de/e/babmed/Corpora/BAM-3/BAM-3_-216.

9 BAM III 216, ll. 29'-30'. See Scurlock and Andersen 2005, 289, Text no. 13.31.

More often medical texts offer something different, and this might be explained by observing the kind of texts here analyzed. As already mentioned in the introduction, both diagnostic and therapeutic texts – which, respectively, offer brief descriptions of symptoms followed by the diagnosis and sometimes a prognosis, and which offer different kinds of prescriptions, in some cases followed by prayers, incantations, and/or the instructions for ceremonial rituals – should be considered as sort of manuals written *by* and *for* professionals. As a matter of fact, they aim to collect long lists of signs and symptoms, therapies and recipes useful to cure the patient, and not to tell how the person feels. Besides few cases, like that showed above, Mesopotamian medical texts might offer what Lakoff and Johnson call "conceptual metaphors." This kind of metaphors could concern the misfortunes and adversities occurred to the patient (even though it must be reminded that they have standardized formulas in which all the possible sins committed by the patient are listed), all the procedures that witch and warlock may have used to transmit diseases and/or for causing the removal of the protective deity, and still a long series of signs, symptoms and diseases that have affected the victim.

The conceptual metaphors relating to disease and pain experienced by the patient – typical of the technical language of the medical professionals, *asû* and āšipu – clearly indicate certain aspects of the Assyro-Babylonian culture, which, in some cases, might be considered very similar to the concepts of our own way of thinking. For instance, one of the most typical conceptual metaphors found in Mesopotamian medical texts is ILLNESS IS A (RAVENOUS) PERSON, where – using verbs like 'to eat' and 'to gnaw' – illness is considered as someone eating the patient's body. As a matter of fact, besides their most common meanings, the verbs *akālu*[10] and *kasāsu*[11] might be used in order to describe the person's suffering, and they could be rendered as 'to devour', and 'to consume, to trouble', respectively.

Some examples from both diagnostic and therapeutic texts follow:

(2) [DIŠ SA.M]EŠ ^{uzu}ÚR-*šú ištē-niš* **GU$_7$.MEŠ-*šú*** ZI-*a u* DU.MEŠ-*ka lā i-le-ʾe-ʾe* SA.GAL [MU.NI]
[If the musc]les of his thigh **devour him** all at once, he cannot stand up or walk about: [it is called] *sagallu*.[12]

(3) [DI]Š NA *ina* DAB ŠU.GIDIM.MA SAG ŠÀ-šú ***i-kàs-sa-su*** (...)
[I]f, as the (result of) affliction by "Hand of ghost", a man, his epigastrium **consumes him**, (...).[13]

10 CAD A1, 245; AHw, 26.
11 CAD K, 242; AHw, 453.
12 SA.GIG 33: 98. See Heeßel 2000, 363; Scurlock 2014, 240.
13 AMT 76, 1: 15. See Scurlock and Andersen 2005, 287, Text no. 13.22.

(4) DIŠ NA S[AG.DU-*su* **GU7.GU7-*šú***] EME-šú *ú-zaq-qa-su* IGI.MEŠ-*š*[*ú* NIGIN-*du* GEŠT]U[^{I}]^{I}-šú *i*-šag-*gu-ma* (...) [*k*]*im-ṣa-šú* G[ÌR^{II}-šú ***i-kàṣ-ṣa-ṣ*]*u-šú*** (...) NA BI *ina* NINDA šu-kul *ina* KAŠ NAG *ina* Ì ŠEŠ (...)
If a man, [his head **keeps devouring him],** his tongue causes him stinging pain, he has [vertigo, his ear]s buzz, (...) [his] legs (and) [his] fe[et **consum]e him**, (...) that man has been given (bewitched) bread to eat, has been given (bewitched) beer to drink, has been anointed with (bewitched) oil.[14]

Other conceptual metaphors very similar to those used in modern Western culture are ILLNESS IS WAR and ILLNESS IS AN ENEMY, where typical are words belonging to the military jargon, such as 'to seize' (*ṣabātu*),[15] 'to fall, to attack, to strike' (*maqātu*),[16] 'to hit, strike' (*mahāṣu*)[17] and 'to overcome' (*kasādu*).[18] These verbs are frequently used in both diagnostic and therapeutic texts, generally denoting strong and violent actions. For instance, *ṣabātu* and *maqātu* are often related to cases of epilepsy and intense seizure, as the following examples show:

(5) [DIŠ UD L]AL-*šú* TA ***iṣ-ṣab-tu-šú*** ÚḪ *ina* KA-*šú* DU-*ak* ŠU LÍL.LÁ.EN.NA [D]IŠ UD L[AL]-*šú* UB.NÍGIN.NA-*šú i-šaḫ-ḫu-ḫa* ŠÀ-*šú* **DAB.DAB-*su*** [ŠÀ].MEŠ-*šú* SI.SÁ.MEŠ-*šú* ŠU GIDIM$_{7}$
[If, when (epylepsy) co]mes over him, then **it seizes him**, saliva flows from his mouth: "Hand of the Lilû-demon".
[I]f, when (epylepsy) co]mes over him, his limbs waste away, his abdomen **keeps seizing him**, his bowels are continually loose: "Hand of ghost."[19]

(6) [DIŠ D]AB-*su ina* A[N.US]AN **DAB.DAB-*su*** [D]AB GI[DI]M$_{7}$
[If] his seizu[re] **continually seizes him** in the night time; seizure of a ghost.[20]

(7) DIŠ GÚ-*su* 15 *u* 150 **ŠUB.ŠUB-*di*** GAM
If his neck **continually falls** to the right or to the left, he will die.[21]

14 AMT 21, 2:1–2, 7, 21–22. See Abusch and Schwemer 2011, 329, Text no. 8.6: 1–2, 7, 21–22.
15 CAD Ṣ, 5–41; AHw, 1066–1071.
16 CAD M1, 240–251; AHw, 695–697.
17 CAD M1, 71–84; AHw, 580–581.
18 CAD K, 271–284; AHw, 459–461.
19 SA.GIG 26: 18'-19'. See Stol 1993, 61; Heeßel 2000, 287; Scurlock 2014, 201.
20 SA.GIG 26: 31'. See Stol 1993, 63: 30; Heeßel 2000, 288: 31'; Scurlock 2014, 202: 31'.
21 SA.GIG 10: 15a. See Labat 1951, 82; Scurlock 2014, 74.

(8) [DIŠ **ŠUB**-*ti* **ŠUB**-*su-ma* UD ŠUB]-šú *an-nu-u šu-ú i-qab-bi b*[*e-en-nu ṣa*]-⌜*idu* DAB⌝-[*s*]*u uš-t*[*e*]-⌜*zeb*⌝
[DIŠ **ŠUB**-*ti* **ŠUB**-*su-ma*] *ina* U_4.1.KÁM 2-*šú* 3-*šú* LAL-*šum-ma ina* [*šer-ti* S]A_5 *ina* AN.⌜ÚSAN SIG_5⌝ AN.⌜TA.ŠUB⌝.BA
[DIŠ **ŠUB**-*ti* **ŠUB**-*su-ma ina* U_4.1.KÁ]M ⌜2⌝-*šú* 3-*šú* ⌜DAB-*su u i-ri-iq*⌝ [GÍD-*ma*] *ina* ŠUB-*ti* TAB.TAB-*šú*
[If *miqtu* **strikes him**, and when it hits him] he says: "This is it!"; the wandering Bennu-demon seized him. He will come through.
[If *miqtu* **strikes him** and] it overcomes (him) two or three times a day, and in the morning he flushes (and) in the evening he turns pale: AN.TA.ŠUB.BA-epilepsy.
[If *miqtu* **strikes him** and] it seizes him two or three times [a da]y and he turns pale: [it will last long and] it will begin with *miqtu*.[22]

The verbs *mahāṣu* and *kasādu* usually denote something serious, too; if the former might indicate a very intense touch, injuries caused by a weapon or the "throbbing pain" affecting a specific part of the patient's body, the latter generally might designate both the disease 'overcoming, conquering, defeating' the victim, and the deities 'overcoming' the patient's enemies. Some examples from the therapeutic texts follow:

(9) DIŠ MUNUS GIG-*ma* $ŠU^{II}$-*šá ina* SAG.DU-*šá* GAR-*na-ma la ur-ra-da-ni* ŠU EN.ÙR KI.MIN MAŠKIM ÙR **SÌG**-***aṣ*** UŠ
If a woman is sick and her hands are placed on her head and she does not bring them down: "Hand of the Lord of the roof." If DITTO: the *rābiṣu* of the roof **has struck her**. She will die.[23]

(10) DIŠ NA SAG.KI-*šú* **RA**-*su-ma* DÙ UZU.MEŠ-*šú* [G]U_7.MEŠ-*šú sà-li-i' qá-te-er* SAG ŠÀ-*šú* [G]U_7-*šú* GU_7 NAG-*ma ut-ta-nar-ra* NA BÍ $UŠ_{11}$.ZU^{I} DAB-*šú*
If a man, his temple **causes him a throbbing pain** and his whole body [con]tinually devours him, he has a black mood (and) is afflicted, his epigastrium devours him, he eats (and) drinks, but he continually throws up: this man, the *kišpū*-witchcraft has seized him.[24]

22 SA.GIG 26: 4'-6'. See Heeßel 2000, 278; Stol 1993, 57: 3–5; Scurlock and Andersen 2005, 318, Text no. 13.187; Scurlock 2014, 200.
23 SA.GIG 37: 11. See Scurlock and Andersen 2005, 440, Text no. 19.42; Scurlock 2014, 255.
24 BAM 2, 193: 8'-10'. See Abusch and Schwemer 2011, 240, Text no. 7.10: 8'-10'.

(11) DIŠ NA ŠÀ-*šú* GIG-*ma* ŠÀ GÌR.PAD.DU-*šú* SIG$_7$ ŠUB-*a* ŠÀ-*šú* [G]IG.MEŠ DIRI UD.DA SÁ.SÁ
If a man, his abdomen is sick and within his bones is yellow-green, his abdomen is full of wounds: *ṣētu* **has overcome him**.[25]

(12) [DIŠ.....SU-šú GE$_6$] KI MUNUS *ina* KI.NÁ ***ka-šid*** ŠU 20 TIN
[DIŠ.....SU-šú] GE$_6$ KI MUNUS *ina* KI.NÁ ***ka-šid*** ŠU 30 TIN
[DIŠ.....SU-šú SI]G$_7$ KI MUNUS *ina* KI.NÁ ***ka-šid*** ŠU ^{d}15 TIN

[If from his head to his feet, he is full of white *bubu'tu* and his body is black]; **he was overcome** when he was in bed with a woman: "Hand of Šamaš." He will get well.
[If from his head to his feet, he is full of red *bubu'tu* and his body] is black; **he was overcome** when he was in bed with a woman: "Hand of Sin." He will get well.
[If from his head to his feet, DITTO and his body] is yellow/green; **he was overcome** when he was in bed with a woman: "Hand of Ištar." He will get well.[26]

Also interesting are those conceptual metaphors concerning an acute type of pain. In the opinion of the anthropologist Allué, since acute and non-chronic, this kind of pain is easier to describe to others, being more easily suitable to the composition of metaphors: "Elle est aussi facile à décrire, on cherche des comparaisons faciles à identifier: 'c'est comme si l'on me plantait un couteau', 'c'est comme si l'on me déchirait les entrailles' ou 'je sens un pincement qui m'empêche même de marcher droit'. La douleur aiguë est, pourtant, la plus abordable."[27]

To this category belong verbs such as *ṣarāpu*[28] and *ḫamātu*,[29] which might express a sort of burning sensation, building the conceptual metaphor "illness is fire." As a matter of fact, even though it is not always clearly expressed, the use of these verbs implies the assimilation of pain to that caused by the burning of fire; the heat caused by certain ailments and pathologies causes this sensation, whether it is perceived on the skin or inside the body.

Here are some examples:

(13) DIŠ N[A ŠÀ].MEŠ-*šú* MÚ.MÚ SAG ŠÀ-*šú* ***ú-ṣar-r*[*ap-šú*]** GABA-[*s*]*u* GU$_7$-šú NINDA.MEŠ *u* KAŠ.MEŠ LAL NA [BI ḪAR.MEŠ GIG] ⌈UŠ$_{11}$⌉ GU$_7$ *u* NAG

25 BAM 6, 575: 21–22. See Scurlock and Andersen 2005, 54, Text no. 3.127; Böck 2010a, 73.
26 SA.GIG 18: 21–23. See also Labat 1951, 170; Heeßel 2000, 219: 21–23; Scurlock 2014, 175: 21–23.
27 Allué 1999, 128.
28 CAD Ṣ, 102–104; AHw, 1083.
29 CAD Ḫ, 64–65; AHw, 316.

If a m[an] his [entrail]s are constantly bloated, his epigastrium **caus[es him] a burning pain**, his chest devours him, he has no desire to eat or drink, [that] man [is sick in his lungs], he has been given the *kišpū*-witchcraft to eat and to drink.[30]

(14) [DIŠ N]A SAG ŠÀ-*šú* ***i-ḫa-am-maṭ-su u*** KÚM-*em* NINDA GU_7-*ma* UGU-šú NU DU-*ak*
A NAG-*ma* UGU-šú NU DÙG.GA *u* SU-*šú* SIG_7 NA BI GIG *na-a-ki* GIG
[If a m]an, his epigastrium **causes him a burning sensation** and he is hot, he eats bread and it does not agree with him, he drinks water and he does not like it and his body is yellow-green, that man is sick with a disease du to illicit sexual intercourse (= he has a venereal disease).[31]

Other verbs expressing an acute kind of pain are *zaqātu*[32], *dakāšu*[33] and *saḫālu*[34], which – with partly different nuances – indicate the stinging pain.[35]

(15) [DIŠ] NA [SAG ŠÀ?]-*šú ú-ḫa-*[*ma-su ú-ma*]-*ḫa-su* ***ú-za-qat-su*** *ú* GU_7-*šú* NA BI A.[GA.ZI G]IG
[If] a man, his [epigastrium] burns him, causes him a throbbing pain, **stings him**, and devours him, this man i[s sick] with the A.[GA.ZI-illness].[36]

(16) DIŠ MUNUS Ù.TU-*ma e-la-an ú-ri-*šá ***ú-sa-ḫal-ši em-ša-ša*** TAG.MEŠ-ši MUNUS BI Ì.RA DAB-*si* (...)
If a woman gives birth and her pubic region **stings her**, her hypogastric region continually touches her, *niru* seizes this woman (...).[37]

(17) DIŠ NA SAG ŠÀ-*šú i-ḫa-maṭ-su* ***i-dak-ka-su*** ÚḪ-*su* x[...] U_4.DA SÁ.SÁ (...)
If a man, his epigastrium burns him, (and) **stings him**, his phlegm is [...], *ṣētu* has reached him (...). [38]

30 BAM 5, 434: 13'-15'. See Abusch and Schwemer 2011, 232, Text no. 7.10.1: 13'-15'.
31 SA.GIG 22: 12–13 (see also SA.GIG 13: 9'-10'). See Labat 1951, 178; Heeßel 2000, 259; Scurlock 2014, 189.
32 CAD Z: 56; AHw, 1513.
33 CAD D: 34. AHw (151) intends it as 'etwa ausbeulen, austreiben'.
34 CAD S: 237; AHw, 1003.
35 For an-depth analysis of these terms, see Salin 2017.
36 BAM 75, ll. 1–2. See Scurlock and Andersen 2005, 287, Text no. 13.21: 1–2. Also in STT I 96: 20.
37 BAM 240, ll. 17'-18'. See also Scurlock and Andersen 2005, 281, Text no. 12.120; Böck 2010b, 112. Whereas the latter interprets Ì.RA as "*niru*", the former translates it as 'striking', probably considering RA as 'to sting' with prefix ì-.
38 AMT 45, 6, ll. 6–7. See Scurlock and Andersen 2005, 287, Text no. 13.20, and Stol 2007, 20, 26. See now tablet *K 2386+* Johnson 2014, 14–16.

Perhaps, presuming its similarity to that caused by a scorpion, we may suppose that the pain denoted by *zaqātu* is very sharp, while that indicated by *saḫālu* and *dakāšu* (and related substantives) is less intense, inasmuch as it generally describes the puncture of a thorn, but the debate about their meaning is still open. Despite that, it is possible to state that the Assyro-Babylonians made an attempt to describe how the patient felt comparing it to that caused both by a scorpion and a thorn.

Metaphors and Conceptual Metaphors on the Body

Some medical texts offer actual metaphors relating to the body and its features. They could compare either some specific parts of the body or some determined illness to something else, describing their aspect or their movements. Here follow some examples concerning the eyes:

> (18) [...] MÚD *šu-har-*[*ra-te*] IGI.MIN GIN$_7$ *nik-si* UDU.NÍTA MÚD *š*[*e-en-a*] GIN$_7$ A.MEŠ *ša a-gala-pe-e a-la-pa-a* ŠUB-*a ki-ma* DUG A.GEŠTIN.NA ŠUB-*a ṣil-la*
> The eyes are suffused with blood like a slaughtered sheep, they are spotted like the water of a lagoon with *alapû*-algae, they are spotted like a vinegar-jar with the *ṣillu*-shadow.[39]
>
> (19) DIŠ UD-*ma* UD.DU-*šú* IGI-*šú šá* 150 GIN$_7$ ^{giš}B[AL *ilammi*] IGI-*šú šá* ZAG MÚD DIRI-*at* (...)
> If, at the time he (= the "Lord of the Roof"-demon) overcomes him, his left eye circles like a spindle, his right eye is full of blood, (...).[40]

These metaphors are really colourful; that comparing the spotted eyes to a slaughtered sheep, clearly refers to the blood squirted during the killing of the animal, while that associating the sick eyes to the vinegar-jar (or, better, to the liquid contained in it) covered with a shadow, compares the vessel and its liquid to the eyes and their watery substance. Example no. 19 relates the movement of the eye to that of the spindle, choosing a very common domestic scene as a comparison.[41]

Interesting are the metaphors written in the 33rd tablet of the diagnostic series SA.GIG, where there are comparisons between "the nature of the illness" and something else, be it another illness, a lesion, or a stone:

39 BAM 6, 510: ii 28'-29'//513: ii 43'-44'//514: ii 40'-41'. See Panayotov 2017, 220–221, ex. no. 5.
40 STT I 89: ii 109–110. See Panayotov 2017, 237; Stol 1993, 16: 91–92.
41 For an in-depth analysis of metaphors relating to the eyes, see Panayotov 2017.

(20) [DIŠ] GIG GAR-*šú* GIN_7 *ni-šik* UḪ-*ma pa-gar-šú* DIRI *a-šu-ú m*[*ut-ta*] *p-ri*-šú MU.NI
[DIŠ] GIG GAR-*šú* GIN_7 *ter-ke-e-ti kal* SU LÚ DIRI *kul-la-ri* MU.NI
[If] the nature of his illness is like the bite of a louse and his body is full (of them), its name is "fleeting" *ašû*.
[If] the nature of his illness is like dark spots and the man's whole body is full (of them), its name is *kullaru*.[42]

(21) DIŠ GIG GAR-*šú* GIN_7 NA_4.ZÚ TA GÚ-*su* NIGIN-*me šá-da-nu* MU.NI
If the nature of his illness is like obsidian (and) goes around his neck, its name is šadānu.[43]

Apart from actual metaphors, in medical texts might be found a generous amount of conceptual metaphors relating to the body.

At this point, it is worth underlying how disease was seen by the Assyro-Babylonians; they considered it as a sort of loss of equilibrium, both physical and social; in other words, they thought that a sick person was living in an anomalous condition, which might be due to the deities' wrath. Indeed, the personal gods and goddesses – who guaranteed physical and mental health, success, and luck – either turned against or abandoned the person, leaving him (or her) open to evil actions, which could be performed by gods, demons, ghosts, and human beings – often witches and warlocks. According to Bottéro, illness was believed to be the punishment ordered by the gods after a sin or a transgression was committed (deliberately or not) by the person,[44] and it could be placed directly inside the human body through physical contact. So, witchcraft – and, consequently, the illness caused by that witchcraft – is something that could enter the body of the victim through contact in particular, with the use of bread to eat and beer to drink; thus, it is something contained within the body. Therefore, the conceptual metaphor apparent here is "the body is a container" or "the body is a house", and it might appear especially in medical incantations and rituals, such as for instance those relating to pregnancy' or childbirth's issues.

Some lines from a collection of incantations recited for a woman in labor having troubles (BAM 248):

(23) ÉN *ina* KAR *mu-ti k*[*a-lat*] GIŠ.MÁ
ina KAR *dan-na-ti* [*k*]*a-l*[*at*] $GIŠ.MÁ.GUR_8$
ul-tu AN-[*e ur-da-an-*]*ni*

42 SA.GIG 33: 6–7. See Scurlock 2014, 236.
43 SA.GIG 33: 28. See Scurlock 2014, 237.
44 For an in-depth analysis of this complex topic see especially Van der Toorn 1985, 56–93; Bottéro 1992, 228; Heeßel 2000, 11–12; 2004, 99; Scurlock 2005, 429–450; 2006, 74; 2016, 4; Koch 2015, 273–278.

ana ^{d}*be-let–ì-lí re-e-me qí-bi-ma*
ur-ḫu li-ši-ir ana ŠÀ [*dan-na*]*-ti li-ṣa-a* [*li-mur*] dUTU-*ši*
(...)
ina IB/LU [...] *liš-li-ma* GIŠ.MÁ
ina IB/LU [...] *liš-te-še-ra* GIŠ.MÁ.GUR$_8$
dan-nu lip-pa-ṭir mar-kas-sa
ù ed-lu lip-pi-ti KÁ-*šá*
DUR *ša* GIŠ.MÁ *a-na* KAR *šul-me*
DUR *ša* GIŠ.MÁ.GUR$_8$ *a-na* KAR TI.LA
meš-re-e-tu lip-te-ṭi-ra li-ir-mu-ú SA.MES
ka-an-ga-tum lup-taš-ši-ra li-ṣa-a nab-ni-tu
GÌR.PAD.DU *a-ḫi-tum bi-nu-ut a-me-lu-ti*
ár-ḫiš li-ta-ṣa-am-ma li-ta-mar ZÁLAG ^{d}UTU-*ši*
Recitation: "The *eleppu*-boat is detained at the quay of death; the *magurru*-boat is held back at the quay of hardship. [Come down] to me from heaven. Command Bēlet-ili to have mercy so that it may go straight toward to the road. May it come out from (the quay of) hardship; [may it see] the sun.
(...)
May the boat be safe in [...]. May the *magurru*-boat go aright in [...]. May her massive mooring rope be loosened, and may her locked gate be opened. (May) the mooring rope of the boat (be moored) to the quay of health, the mooring rope of the boat to the quay of life. (...) May the sealed woman be loosened; may the offspring come out, a separate body, a human creature. May he come out promptly and see the light of the sun.[45]

In this very interesting text numerous conceptual metaphors stand out. In addition to those related to the imagery of closed doors – as a matter of fact, the parturient is considered as a house, where doors 'are locked' (*edlu*)[46] and block the exit of the child – the most evident one is that of the boat,[47] which might refer both to the mother – who is carrying her "precious load" towards the "quay of life" – and to the foetus – who begins to move through the birth canal. Furthermore, the conceptual metaphors CHILDBIRTH IS A JOURNEY and CHILDBIRTH IS WAR/PRISON might be seen, since the words used in the text are related to the topics of the journey (such as 'to advance, go towards' *ešēru*)[48] and war/prison (such as 'to detain, hold back' *kalû*).[49]

45 BAM 248: i 62–66; ii 48–56. For an in-depth analysis of the myth, see Röllig 1985; Veldhuis 1991. For other translations, see Farber 1987; Foster 1996; Stol 2000, 66–70; Scurlock 2014, 601.
46 CAD E, 33–36; AHw, 187–188.
47 On this interesting topic, see among others Hätinen 2017.
48 CAD E, 352; AHw, 254.
49 CAD K, 95–104; AHw, 428–429.

Conclusion

In this paper some of the most common metaphors and conceptual metaphors according to the Assyro-Babylonians have been proposed. It has been shown that metaphors *per se* are not very frequent in medical texts, and – where they are present – they might be related to the description of a specific kind of pain, a part of the human body or specific characteristics of certain diseases.

As far as the conceptual metaphors are concerned, it has been shown that they might refer to many and various domains. The most frequent is ILLNESS IS A (RAVENOUS) PERSON, where verbs such as 'to devour' and 'to consume' describe the disease as someone eating the patient's body. Other conceptual metaphors are those using verbs of the military jargon, describing the disease as something "seizing", "striking", and "overwhelming" the victim; these conceptual metaphors – ILLNESS IS WAR, ILLNESS IS AN ENEMY – are very similar to those used in modern Western culture, where diseases are considered something to defeat. The same might be stated for those concerning acute kinds of pain – such as the burning sensation – which might be rendered as ILLNESS IS FIRE. Other conceptual metaphors express more general ideas, such as those referring to the body as a container/a house, or those considering life in general and childbirth in particular as a journey.

Although brief and partial, this research might be considered as a starting point for further analysis, where other kinds of metaphors and conceptual metaphors might be examined, hopefully allowing us to shed more light on such a fascinating culture as that of ancient Mesopotamia.

As Gibbs sates: "Over the last decades, numerous studies from various disciplines, especially from the fields of cognitive science, history and philosophy of science, and medical and cultural anthropology, have demonstrated the pervasiveness of metaphor and related tropes (such as metonymy and analogy) not only in human language, but also in cognition, everyday thinking, scientific reasoning and various other domains of culture."[50]

Bibliography

Abusch, T., Schwemer, D. 2011. *Corpus of Mesopotamian Anti-Witchcraft Rituals*, Ancient Magic and Divination 8/1, Leiden/Boston: Brill.

Allué, M. 1999, "La douleur en direct", *Anthropologie et sociétés*, Québec 23/2, 117–137.

Böck, B. 2010a, "Epilepsie, Schlaganfall und Lähmung", in: B. Janowski – D. Schwemer (eds), *Texte zur Heilkunde*, Texte aus der Umwelt des Altes Testament NF 5, Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlagshaus, 90–98.

50 Gibbs 1994, 122.

—. 2010b, "Konzeption, Kontrazeption, Geburt, Frauenkrankheiten", in: B. Janowski – D. Schwemer (eds), *Texte zur Heilkunde*, Texte aus der Umwelt des Altes Testament NF 5, Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlagshaus, 107–114.

Bottéro, J. 1992, *Mesopotamia: Writing, Reasoning, and the Gods*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Farber, W. – Kümmel, H.M. – Römer, W.H.Ph. 1987, *Rituale und Beschwörungen I*, *Texte aus der Umwelt* des Alten Testaments II/2, Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlagshaus, 274–276.

Foster, B.R. 1996, "An inscription of Enlil-Bani of Isin", *Nouvelles Assyriologiques Brèves et Utilitaires* 21, 14.

Gibbs, R.W.Jr. 1994, *The Poetics of Mind: Figurative Thought, Language, and Understanding*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Hätinen, A. 2017, "'I am a fully laden boat!' A Mesopotamian Metaphor Revisited", *KASKAL* 14, 169–186.

Heeßel, N.P. 2000, *Babylonisch-assyrische Diagnostik*, Alter Orient und Altes Testament 43, Münster : Ugarit Verlag.

Koch, U.S. 2015, *Mesopotamian Divination Texts: Conversing with the Gods. Sources from the First Millennium BCE*, Guides to the Mesopotamian Textual Record 7, Münster: Ugarit Verlag.

Köcher, F. 1963–1980, *Die Babylonisch-assyrische Medizin in Texten und Untersuchungen* (*BAM*) 1–6, Berlin: de Gruyter.

Johnson, J.C. 2014, "Towards a reconstruction of SUALU IV: Can we localize K 2386+ in the therapeutic corpus?", *Le Journal des Médecines Cunéiformes* 24, 11–38.

Labat, R. 1951, *Traité akkadienne de diagnostics et pronostics médicaux* (TDP), Paris: Académie internationale d'histoire de sciences.

Lakoff, G. – Johnson, M. 1980, *Metaphors We Live By*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Panayotov, S. 2017, "Eye Metaphors, Analogies and Similes within Mesopotamian Magico-Medical Texts", in: J. Wee, *The Comparable Body - Analogy and Metaphor in Ancient Mesopotamian, Egyptian, and Greco-Roman Medicine*, Leiden/Boston: Brill, 204–246.

Pizza, G. 2011, *Antropologia Medica. Saperi, pratiche e politiche del corpo*, Roma: Carocci.

Röllig, W. 1985, "Der Mondgott und die Kuh. Ein Lehrstück zur Problematik der Textüberlie-ferung im Alten Orient", *Orientalia Nova Series* 54, 260–273.

Salin, S. 2017, "'Stinging pain' in Assyro-Babylonian Medical Texts: Some Considerations", *Le Journal des Médecines Cunéiformes* 29, 35–48.

—. 2018, "Words for Loss of Sensation and Paralysis in Assyro-Babylonian Medical Texts: Some Considerations", *Le Journal des Médecines Cunéiformes* 31, 26–37.

Scurlock, J. 2006, *Magico-Medical Means of Treating Ghost-Induced Illnesses in Ancient Mesopotamia*, Ancient Magic and Divination 3, Leiden: Brill.

—. 2014, *Sourcebook for Ancient Mesopotamian Medicine*, Writings from the Ancient World, Atlanta: SBL Press.

—. 2016, "Divination between Religion and Science", in J. Fincke (ed), *Divination as Science. A Workshop Conducted during the 60th Rencontre Assyriologique Internationale, Warsaw, 2014*, Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 1–10.

Scurlock, J. – Andersen, B.R. 2005, *Diagnoses in Assyrian and Babylonian Medicine*, Illinois: University of Illinois Press.

Steinert, U. 2017, "Concepts of the female body", in: J. Wee (ed), *The Comparable Body. Analogy and Metaphor in Ancient Mesopotamian, Egyptian, and Graeco-Roman Medicine*, Leiden/Boston: Brill, 275–357.

Stol, M. 1993, *Epilepsy in Babylonia,* Cuneiform Monographs 2, Groningen: Brill.

—. 2000, *Birth in Babylonia and the Bible. Its Mediterranean Settings,* Cuneiform Monographs 14, Groningen: Brill.

—. 2007, "Remarks on Some Sumerograms and Akkadian Words", in: M.T. Roth – W. Farber – M.W. Stolper – P. Bechtolsheim (eds), *Studies Presented to R.D. Biggs*, Assyriological Studies 27, Chicago: The Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago, 233–242.

Van der Toorn, K. 1985, *Sin and Sanction in Israel and Mesopotamia. A comparative study*, Assen/Maastricht: Van Gorcum.

Veldhuis, N. 1991, *A Cow of Sîn*, Library of Oriental Texts 2, Groningen: Brill.

Metaphor for the Construction of Spontaneous Meaning: Examples Gathered from the Rural Landscape in Sumerian Literature

Nelson Henrique da Silva Ferreira
(Centro de Estudos Clássicos e Humanísticos da Universidade de Coimbra)

Farming had an intrinsic influence on the cultural matrix of the entire Mesopotamian region, regulating daily activities and interfering with the conceptualization of the surrounding cosmos. The relation landscape/agricultural is an engine of linguistic creativity and established connections between abstract thought and natural world. The language generated from such interaction is a semiotic manifestation, which correspond to a simplistic and obvious image to an interlocutor who recognizes meaning on images culturally transmitted by traditional preconceptions.

This paper proposes a brief analytic discussion on "signs of meaning" mechanics through examples such as abundance's concept, which can be traced in visual expression from "protoliterate times" onward. We argue how linguistic thought preserved images of richness, loss and prosperity generated from the visual agricultural landscape and from the relation human/ natural phenomena/ production. Latter, those images were expressed in literature as figuration of an abstract meaning intrinsically connected to traditional thought and common-sense. Sumerian literary texts are examples of transmission vehicles for pre-historical semantic construction of traditional symbolism and its social value, regarding a cultural reality. Those images are archaeologic objects, for they are the closer one can get to the day-by-day reality of a Sumerian speaker.

How can semiotics be helpful for anthropological studies on "silent voices" of the past?

Literature as Source

The exegesis of literature is inevitably based on modern preconceptions. Even the suggestion and identification of "linguistic thought" is an interpretation based on our conceptions of traditional thought. For this reason, I have opted to classify some of the symbols not by words, using a crystallized lexicon, but by the ideas expressed in the texts, which means that the concept of "signs of meaning" is crucial to my argument on transversal

human thought. It is important to remember that words are very evocative. They can identify specific objects, but the same objects may suggest other meanings, depending on function, shape, colour, texture or cultural reception. Therefore, the word that identifies the object may also identify other abstract ideas and even other objects. For example, considering "phallic imagery" and the many associations it may have with the shape of an object. Conversely, if one considers all the objects that have a phallic shape, we find a never-ending list of objects that can symbolize a penis in modern popular discourse. In any culture, the word is not the only meaningful tool that can be used to identify an object.[1] It is the speech context that is given to the object that is crucial to its identification, regardless of the syntagma being used. In this sense, we cannot believe exclusively in the reliability of the lexicon for identifying meaning but can try to recreate context through this semantic multiplicity by analysing the signs of meaning inspired in the image that serve as the basis of its semantic composition.

In addition, given the lack of cultural context for understanding the semantics of Sumerian words, it was necessary to work with abstract ideas in order to create meaning, instead of using possible synonyms and exact definitions of concrete *syntagma*.

In general terms, regarding the objective of this study and following a simplifying approach, one can divide semiotics in the following concepts:

Sign of meaning: A visual marker that identifies the individual characteristics of an image that can convey a crystalized meaning. For example, a landscape described as having a lot of fruit trees bears the sign for quantity and the sign for production, materialized in the fruit. A sign is neither positive, nor negative[2] but simply marks a specific characteristic that is part of a symbol. I have identified only one exact semantic value for each sign.[3]

Symbol: Corresponds to a compound of signs of meaning. Signs can be selected in order to construct a complex or a traditional symbol.

Traditional symbol: The compounding of crystalized signs of meaning to express the entire semantic range of the symbolic image. It is the abstract representation of an original image that served as the basis for the symbolic construction which is present in the collective mind. The symbolic image is interpreted spontaneously and relies on empirical knowledge of the natural world.

Complex symbol or literary symbol: A selective compounding of crystalized signs in order to construct a symbol whose meaning depends on context and literary purpose. It tends to take the form of a metaphor or allegory.[4]

Value: An "objective meaning" i.e. what a lexeme or idea represents as a concrete object. For example, the value of a tree in a literary or lexical context corresponds to its mean-

1 On metaphorical references to the penis in Sumerian literature, see Leick 2003, 48–54. On the Roman context, see Richlin 1992. Cf. also the Renaissance examples presented by Varriano 2005.

2 See also Eco's definition of signs (2002, 29–43) and Aguiar and Silva 1997, 76–79. On Umberto Eco's theory, see also Lorusso 2015, 117–158.

3 This study follows the general principles of the semiotics of signs applied to images crystalized by common sense and tradition and also to material culture. On signs of meaning concerning material culture, see Preucel 2006 21–92. On semiotics, cf. also Cobley 2010.

4 Regarding the relation between metaphor, semantics, and literary context, see Stern 2008.

ing as an object. It is the image alone which is important and therefore the value of a tree lies in the representation itself, which has no positive or negative connotations. However, if the tree is used as a metaphor, it may suggest other objects, for example, an erect penis. The value of the tree corresponds to one or more of the signs of its image and thus in the case of the metaphor for the penis, it corresponds to the signs for the "straight" and "erect" representation of the tree.[5]

Identifying Signs of Meaning in Literary Texts

Metaphor and allegory have unlimited potential in linguistic creativity: there are literally no manageable limits to their use. Any image of nature and experience of rural life can be converted into a linguistic comparison with an abstract object or, in other words, into signs of meaning or symbolic constructions. Theories of metaphor are not debated here, since definitions which describe them as "involving a comparison or similarity between two or more objects" or as "interactions between two semantic fields" are not relevant to the idea of the conceptualization of objects based on signs of meaning. In fact, I would argue that the debate on the concept of metaphor is to some extent sterile: it attempts to define a concept that is artificial, hence no one thinks about the concept of a metaphor when using it in everyday language. Essentially, a metaphor is what a user wants it to be. Therefore, how can boundaries be established for the interpretation and definition of generalised traditional metaphors if there is no such awareness? Is that even possible?

Without the definition of "an exact traditional culture" it would be pure speculation to distinguish between exactly what literary language and traditional abstract language are and how this is expressed through metaphor, whether Sumerian or Egyptian or Roman. In that sense, how can we distinguish between a popular traditional metaphor and a literary or complex one?

Firstly, a metaphor is a metaphor, regardless of its complexity, since it corresponds to a particular type of linguistic construction which has semantic functions. Therefore, all metaphors should basically obey the same principles and if one can understand and contextualize an image presented in a text, one can identify the source of the metaphor by identifying abstract meaning that has its source in nature, since it functions as a spontaneous metaphor. Visual signs of meaning offer us images of a world that formed the basis of linguistic creativity without the need to consider theoretical debates on literary concepts. In this sense, I do not intend to engage in hermeneutic discussions on the general literary expression of metaphors, nor its philosophical principles, as the focus of this study does not imply entering into a formal extended debate on literature. Hence, I have avoided specific definitions of metaphor, which are normally dependent on particular rhetorical contexts and forms of expression, whether textual or plastic.

5 Cf. fn. 1.

In a strict sense, metaphor is an abstract comparison between two images, one of which is stated and is taken to represent the other. Therefore, it is an explanation of an image through another image, which can supplement and expand the meaning of the idea that the speaker wants to transmit. The metaphors examined in this study tend to be used to enhance and describe meaning through something that is embedded in the collective memory,[6] although I do not theorize on the conceptual idea of metaphor applied to each example, but rather will decompose it into signs of meaning.

Metaphor is used to create meaning through the semantics of an image intrinsically connected to the cultural matrix and the collective abstract thought of the people living within this matrix. In that sense, although literature is the main source for this study, I do not attempt to present a philological study by commenting on aesthetics and literary resources but instead, with regard to the history of traditional thought, will present a sociological/anthropological study based on key semiotic principles. In presenting quotations from LSUr or Inana B, for example, the aim is to extract information from its signs of meaning, i.e. the literal data, not the literary data, which has already been widely studied by other scholars. In using Sumerian literature as a source, it is not always possible to clearly and definitively identify metaphor or allegory, and I have therefore had to trust in personal interpretation guided by the signs of meaning that can be identified.

Abstract language and the images which it generates can be a valuable resource for understanding traditional thought. Abstract language is composed of manifestations of reality constructed from abstract images, which are the basic building blocks in the development and crystallization of traditional thought and the conceptualization of the surrounding natural world. Literature is the vehicle for those images, since the voices of the ancient cultures were, and are, silent.

As Iser says, "As a concomitant phenomenon of human development, literature appears to be the mirror that allows humans to see themselves reflected in their manifestations. Such a view of oneself may not result in any immediate practical consequences, especially since this self-perceiving is inauthentic, highlighted by the fictional "as if." This inauthenticity, however, does not seem to invalidate this self-examination, since humans never cease to perform it."[7] In other words, literature may reflect fictional realities, but the symbolic language used to produce it is based on a reality, otherwise it would not be intelligible. In this approach, the reality is identified in each sign of meaning manifested in a descriptive image, whether the said image is objective, metaphorical or allegorical.

Although language variation is a crucial aspect of our physiological, psychological and conceptual systems,[8] the mechanisms for generating meaning seem to follow the same universal principles, at least when they concern a conceptualization of the surrounding world that has some effect on human social reality. This is the reason why it is possible

6 On conceptual metaphor, see Lakoff and Johnson 1980.
7 Iser 2000, 157.
8 Brown 2007.

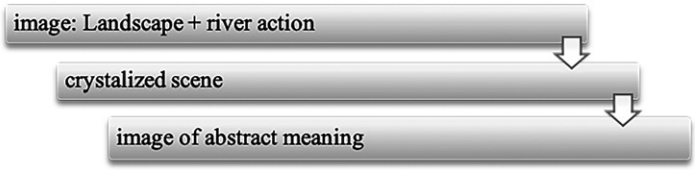
to identify the same signs of meaning in two unrelated ancient literatures, as I intend to demonstrate from a selection of literary examples.[9]

Context: the Landscape of Flood as a Source for Meaning Construction

For example, within the symbol of the flood as an engine of destruction, it is possible to identify the following relationship between signs from the image of the river:

Sign of fluidity + Sign of power + Sign of volume+ Sign of motion.

Regarding examples of the flood in literature, Chen states that "...the flood terminology found in most of these earlier sources is used figuratively as similes or metaphors for the depiction of the invincible and overwhelming power of mythical and human figures, which are presumably based on the common ecological phenomenon of regular flooding in southern Mesopotamia. None of the representations of destructive floods from third millennium sources can be identified with the primeval flood catastrophe that was believed to have wiped out the whole world except for a few survivors in the primeval time of origins, as portrayed in the mythological traditions such as the Atrahasīs Epic, or to have divided early world history into the antediluvian and postdiluvian eras (...)."[10] In this sense, one can say with some certainty that the symbolic meanings of the flood predate any mythological description, at least concerning the concrete and objectifying image generated by the action/effect of a mass of water from a river that has burst its banks.



In *Inana's Exaltation* (Inana B), flood and destruction are presented as a portrait of a landscape. In order to establish the potential consequences of the goddess' power, it is necessary to create an image that, in itself, could translate the value of Inana's capacities. Taking antiquity as a reference, only nature can transmit this value, and therefore only nature can portray and give meaning to such destructive power:

9. ušumgal-gin$_7$ kur-re uš$_{11}$ ba-e-šum$_2$
10. ^{d}iškur-gin$_7$ ki šeg$_x$(KA×LI) gi$_4$-a-za ^{d}ezina$_2$ la-ba-e-ši-ĝal$_2$
11. a-ma-ru kur-bi-ta ed$_3$-de$_3$

9 There is a list of selected symbols and signs of meaning and the correspondent texts in the appendix to this paper.

10 Chen 2013, 4. For an extended discussion of the primeval flood as a cultural, literary and historical theme see *ibid*.

12. saĝ-kal an ki-a ^{d}inana-bi-me-en[11]
9. "You poisoned the foreign land like a dragon.
10. When you roar at the earth like Iškur, no vegetation can withstand you.[12]
11. As a flood descending from (?) the mountains (?),[13]
12. you are their Inana, the powerful one of heaven and earth."

One can also consider the mechanism of constructing meaning in ll. 9–10. Inana can kill as a serpent (ušumgal-gin$_7$), but instead of inflicting limited, individual damage, the goddess has the power to affect an entire region by spreading her venom over the land, bringing sterility to the fields and making them infertile. In these lines, there is a kind of comparative gradation, since Inana multiplies the capacities that would be recognisable in nature since her power is translated through a hyperbolic interpretation of a crystalized image: the danger of a serpent. This mechanism for constructing meaning from an image of the real world can be seen throughout the canon of universal literature.

At this point it is important to note that, regardless of the great value of Inana in the Sumerian pantheon,[14] I do not intend to discuss religious and mythological symbology here. However, the fact that this goddess represents a kind of fertility deity associated with the fields makes her a special subject in the texts under analysis.

Line 11 seems to suggest that the goddess behaves like a flood that comes from above (a-ma-ru + ed$_3$-de$_3$); and, as a flood, her power is unstoppable. Following this semantic construction, it can be understood that nothing would stand in her path. Here, the potential of the image used to construct linguistic meaning is easily identifiable and was probably instantly recognised, since it is derived from traditional, common-sense based representations, instead of being a highly literary and aesthetic metaphor. Nevertheless, it remains a metaphor.

This mechanism is used in the same way in the following text, Išme-Dagan S,[15] which is a dedication on a statue:

13. zig$_3$-ga-ni u$_{18}$-lu a-ma-ru tum$_9$ sumur-ba du-a
14. a$_2$-na ba$_9$-ra$_2$-a-ba ĝa$_2$-ĝa$_2$-ĝa$_2$-da-na su$_3$-ud-bi-še$_3$ ĝir$_2$-ĝir$_2$-re
15. piriĝ ḫuš edin-na-gin$_7$ usu nam-šul-ba du-a

11 Inana B. cf. *A praise poem of* Šulgi (Šulgi O) ll. 23–24, ll. 53–54; comp.t. Klein 1976, ETCSL c. 2.4.2.15.
12 cf. Hallo and van Dijk 1968.
13 Cf. Angim l. 119. me$_3$-ĝu$_{10}$ a-maḫ e$_3$-a-gin$_7$ kur-re ba-ra-ab-[e$_3$], "My battle, like a raised flood, [overflowed] in the mountains." Cf. Išme-Dagan S l. 13; Gudea E3/1.1.7.Cyl. A col. xv ll. 24–26 (Edzard 1997, 78); CLAM 413–419, ll.39–44. Cf. ll. 10–11 with LSUr l. 72.
14 Guevara 2004, 129.
15 On the Išme-Dagan reign see Frayne 1998

13. "His rising is a south wind (storm), a flood, a wind blowing in its fury.[16]
14. Who by moving his swinging arms runs off into the distance,
15. who like a terrifying lion from the open country moves with might and vigour."

Again, there is an idea of power that can only be measured by an evocative comparison with natural phenomena. The precise evaluation of nature's capacity to cause harm is derived from previous observation of a catastrophe or an understanding of how such an event could affect human life. Individuals in contact with nature can spontaneously measure how destructive such event could be. It reveals the fragility of a life dependent on tilling and herding, since an uncontrolled flood would destroy pasturelands, crops and canals and bring starvation (see infra).

Any interlocutor aware of the interaction between the "natural world" and the "agricultural universe" would identify the semantic value of this picture, as he would be familiar with the signs of meaning that compound the symbol.

In fact, the flood contains the sign for strength and energy, as something so powerful and out of control that it exceeds human powers. Therefore, its symbol can transmit the idea of immeasurable energy, since the consequences of its effects are known:[17]

15. e-ne-em$_3$-ma$_3$-ne$_2$ a-ma-ru zi-ga gaba-šu-gar nu-un-tuku
16. e-ne-em$_3$-ma$_3$-ne$_2$ an al-dub$_2$-dub$_2$-be$_2$ ki al-sig$_3$-sig$_3$-ga
(...)
19. e-ne-em$_3$-^{d}Asar-lu$_2$-ḫi buru$_{14}$ isin-ba mu-ni-ib$_2$-su$_3$-su$_3$
20. umun-e e-ne-em$_3$-ma$_3$-ni a-zi-ga-ma$_3$ KA al-ur$_3$!-ra
21. e-ne-em$_3$-^{d}Asar-lu$_2$-ḫi a-maḫ-am$_3$ k[ar al-ša$_5$-ša$_5$]
22. umun-e e-ne-em$_3$-ma$_3$-ne$_2$ ^{giš}mes-gal-gal-la gu$_2$-gur$_5$-uš [am$_3$-me]
23. [e-ne-em$_3$-ma$_3$-ni u$_4$-d]e$_3$ du$_6$-du$_6$-da šu-še$_3$ al-[ma-ma]
15. "Those words of his, a swelling flood, have no rival.[18]
16. Those words of his make the heavens tremble, the earth quake.
(...)
19. The word of Asarluhi sinks the harvest on its stalks.
20. The word of the lord is a swelling flood that ⌜sweeps away⌝ ... (cf. LSUr l. 73)
21. The word of Asarluhi is a flood that [transforms the wharfs.]
22. The words of the lord [are] a pile of huge mes-trees.
23. [The words of he] that duels with all and [...] into ruins."

16 Cf. infra, CLAM 123–137, ll. 15–24. Cf. *Lugalbanda in the mountain cave* l. 469 (comp.t. ETCSL 1.8.2.1; Vanstiphout 2003).

17 CLAM 120–151, ll. 15–25; CDLI no. P414268.

18 Cf. a+36. [a-ma-ru-z]i-ga gaba šu-gar nu-un-t[uku], a+36. It (the word) is a swelling flood that has no rival. In CLAM 319–332, ll. 1–14, ll. 28–98.

This example describes the effects of a flood. Metaphors of nature and agriculture make the value of Asarluhi's words clear: the words are like a flood, so nothing can withstand it. Essentially, his will is overwhelming and definitive, like a flood: a flood cannot be contradicted (gaba-šu-gar nu-un-tuku), and nor can Asarluhi's words.[19] The consequences of Asarluhi's words are the destruction of the crops (buru$_{14}$ isin-ba mu-ni-ib$_2$-su$_3$-su$_3$; cf. Inana B ll. 11–12). Therefore, they are terrifying, for they summon up the same level of calamity in the collective mind as the idea of a great famine.

The semantic expansion of the effects of Asarluhi's dramatic power can be identified in the metaphor of the flood because the flood image is crystalized in traditional thought, together with its consequences for the landscape. Regardless of the text's description of the effects of the flood, the image is popularly understandable in its entirety and spontaneously underlines and recalls its own semantic value: the destruction of the crops signifies unbearable suffering.[20] This extract has been cited because it presents the symbolic meaning of the flood together with a description of its image, which enables some of the signs that compound the symbol to be identified: sign of quantity + sign of fluidity = destruction of crops.

A similar example is presented in the text *Elum Gusun: Honoured One, Wild Ox* (CLAM 271–288):

b+93. a-ma-ru na-nam kur al-gul-gul
b+94. u$_3$-mu-un[21]-e e-ne-em$_3$-ma$_3$-ni a-ma-[ru na-nam]
b+95. ša$_3$-bi e-lum-e a-ma-ru na-[nam]
b+96. ša$_3$-bi <<e>> ^{d}Mu-ul-lil$_2$ a-ma-ru na-nam
b+97. u$_3$-mu-un-na ša$_3$-an-še$_3$ an im-dub$_2$-ba ni ib X
b+98. ^{d}Mu-ul-lil$_2$ e-ne-em ki-še$_3$ ki im-sig$_3$-ga-ni [22]
(...)
b+101. e-ne-em$_3$-ma$_3$-ni a-ma-ru zi-ga gaba šu-gar nu-[tuku]
b+93. "He truly is the flood that destroys the land. (cf. UHF l. 552)
b+94. The word of the lord [is truly a flo]od.
b+95 The heart of the illustrious one [is indeed] a flood.
b+96. The heart of Enlil is indeed a flood.
b+97. The lord causes the interior of the heavens to tremble ...X
b+98. The word (of) Enlil causes the interior of the earth to shake.
(...)
b+101. His word is a raised flood that [knows] no opposition."

19 Cf. CA ll. 149–151; CLAM 500–518 ll. a+69-a+86.
20 On the idea of fragility in the face of the elements, see ll. 69–78, comp.t.: CLAM 126–27, ll. 61–79; Inana B ll. 1–43.
21 Umun (Emesal).
22 Cf. CLAM 319–332, l. a+36.

Another example is found in ll. 76–78 of the LSUr, but in this instance the image is expanded into a larger landscape:

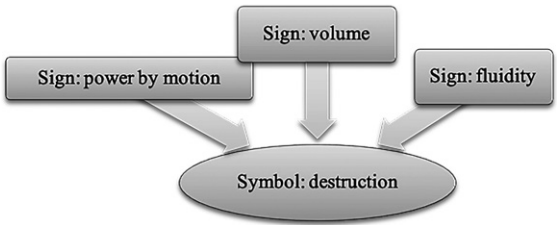
> 76. DU-bi a-ma-ru ^{d}en-lil$_2$-la$_2$ gaba gi$_4$ nu-tuku-am$_3$
> 77. tum$_9$ gal edin-na edin-e im-si igi-še$_3$ mu-un-ne-ĝen
> 78. edin niĝ$_2$-daĝal-la-ba sag$_3$ ba-ab-dug$_4$ lu$_2$ nu-mu-ni-in-dib-be$_2$ (cf. CA ll. 149–151)
> 76. "Their movement, like the flood of Enlil, cannot be withstood.
> 77. The great wind of the countryside filled the countryside, it moved against them.
> 78. The vastness of the countryside was disturbed, no one moved there."

The signs of the flood are used to show the interlocutor the extent of the god Enlil's power. The landscape is a passive agent that generates meaning. This image of destruction would have been recognised by an interlocutor who understood what Enlil's powers implied, as summarised in l. 405:

> 405. elam^{ki}-e a maḫ e$_3$-a-gin$_7$ gidim im-ma-ni-ib$_2$-ĝar
> 405. "The Elamites, like a swelling flood wave, left there (only) ghosts."

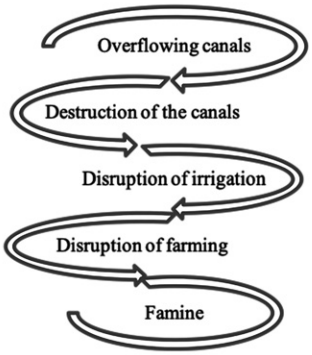
In a text addressed to Enlil, the lamentation *Utugin Eta: Come out like the Sun* (Cohen 1988, CLAM), the action of the god is expressed by the destruction of the land, explained through the traditional signs for the flood and the visual disruption of the "domesticated waters":

> b+253. kur na-am$_2$-ge$_{16}$-le-em$_3$-ma$_3$ im-ma-ni-in-ma-al
> b+254. kur na-am$_2$-ge$_{16}$-[le-em$_3$]-ma$_3$ i$_7$-da i-ni-in-de$_2$ (CLAM 103–116, ll. b+253–254)
> b+253. "He has destroyed the land.
> b+254. He poured (the waters of) destruction into the canals of the land" (trans. Cohen 1988, 113).



This example shows the destruction of the canals or the destruction that comes through the canals, probably by a flood. The main idea of the image is to present a feeling of dis-

ruption through a chain of relations that have, as their final consequence, starvation and the destruction of farmland:



Thus, the idea of the canal ('i_7') as a means of destruction can represent a direct consequence, or chain reaction that results in something bad. Here, it is the context that makes the symbol negative. However, the traditional symbol is always the same: its compounding signs do not change because they belong to a crystalized image, and the distinction between positive or negative values depends on the context of the action and the combination of signs. The interlocutor constructs the image spontaneously, without the need to think about the relation between the events because he already knows the signs.

In Inana B ll. 43–46, the river is shown as an allegory for death instead of life, which it should represent in a harmonious world. A semantic value is created by the river that carries blood or literally death ($uš_2$):[23]

> 43. kur saĝ ki-za ba-e-de_3-gid_2-de_3-en ^{d}ezina$_2$ $niĝ_2$-gig-bi
> 44. abul-la-ba izi mu-ni-in-ri-ri
> 45. $\underline{id_2}$-$\underline{ba\ uš_2}$ ma-ra-an-de_2 $uĝ_3$-bi {ma-ra-na_8-na_8} {(2 mss. have instead:) ba-ra-na_8-na_8}
> 43. "{Once you have extended your province over the hills} {(2 mss. have instead:) If you frown at the mountains}, the vegetation there is ruined.[24]
> 44. You have reduced to ashes its grand entrance.[25]
> 45. $\underline{\text{Blood}}$ is poured into $\underline{\text{their rivers}}$ because of you, and their people {must drink it} {(2 mss. have instead:) could not drink}."

Inana is presented as possessing a power capable of destroying fields and killing plants, which would inevitably mean death by starvation. This meaning is conveyed by the im-

23 *Damu,* CAD 3, 75–80. One could speculate that the river without blood may serve here as an inversion of the idea of "water of life."
24 Trans. Hallo and Younger 2003, 519.
25 Trans. Hallo and Younger 2003, 519.

age of vegetation which has become in some way 'abnormal' (^{d}ezina$_{2}$ niĝ$_{2}$-gig-bi) and the visual death of the landscape is extended through the image of human death, namely the 'blood' (uš$_{2}$) in the 'river' (id$_{2}$-ba). In fact, the intensity of this metaphor can be identified in the inversion of value from life to death. The river, a provider of life, is shown as a symbol of destruction, bringing the extreme opposite of this value to the scene.[26] The destruction is so universal that a symbol that should represent life becomes the manifestation of death. Different versions exist for line 45, which may indicate different lexical results (ma-ra-na$_{8}$-na$_{8}$ or ba-ra-na$_{8}$-na$_{8}$, as suggested by the ETCLS comp.t), although in terms of the image created, the semantic value remains the same.

Inana's actions caused the death of these people. In assuming this interpretation, the textual ambiguity/variant in l. 45 is not so relevant: "they have no water to drink" or "they have to drink the blood of their own people." The value lies in the destruction reflected in the river, regardless of its direct effect on people's lives. If the river is blood nothing will live, as the new river is no longer the source for life in those lands, but the result of death. Alternatively, it could signify the river bearing the blood of the people it should feed, although this is a more complex interpretation which I do not intend to follow here.

The Euphrates was the source of water and silt, change and continuity in the surrounding arid environment where other natural resources were scarce. It made the fields and orchards fertile but brought destruction or scarcity every time the rivers overflowed beyond the expected limits or every time its level was too low.[27] The dangers of flooding would always have been present in the collective mind of the farmers, whether due to the river's absence or its excessive power.[28]

The idea of the flood is essentially about the effects of action/motion on a static reality or, in other words, transformation. When a specific aspect is emphasized, the flood is framed within a precise moment, as in the text *Mutin Nunuz Dima: Fashioning Man And Woman*[29] when the cities are destroyed by the same source that normally makes them fertile:

> a+102. [uru$_{2}$] a-du$_{11}$-ga a-gi$_{4}$-a-za
> a+103. Nibru^{ki} a-du$_{11}$-ga a-ta mar-ra-za[30]
> a+102. "[In your city], which has been flooded, which has been inundated,[31]
> a+103. in your Nippur, which has been flooded, which has been sunken under the waters, (...)."[32]

26 Angim l. 171; Gudea E3/1.1.7. Cyl. A ll. 5–9 (Edzard 1997).
27 Adam 1981.
28 Cf. the destruction of the landscape in LSUr ll.1–11.
29 Cohen 1988.
30 CLAM 222–245, ll. a+102-a+111.
31 Cf. the scenario presented in UrN A ll. 22–30.
32 The following lines (ll.a+104-a+109) are repeated for Sippar, Tintir and Isin. Cf. LUr ll. 202–203.

The city no longer exists since it has been submerged; the image implies death, starvation, misery and chaos. It is not the traditional symbol that is negative, but the context that gives it a negative value.

The destruction of fields and farms would have been a constant danger or, at least, the fear of such events would have been present in the collective memory, together with its crystalized meaning, whose visual representation is clearly framed in UrN A:

22. ⌈a-eštub[33] id$_2$⌋-da de$_2$-a-bi ku$_3$-ĝal$_2$-bi ba-sig$_9$
23. [še gu]-nu a-gar$_3$-re mu$_2$-a-⌈bi⌋ zi kalam-ma ba-su
22. "⌈The early flood⌋ poured into the ⌈canals⌋, the canal-inspector was silent;
23. [the barley and the flax] grown in the meadow, the life of the land, was submerged."

This is an image of a wasteland. The meaning of this image, as far as it can be reconstructed, clearly shows the signs of the symbol: something that should have brought fertility instead brought an end to the harvest, since the meadows are submerged (zi kalam-ma ba-su) by the early flood that should have brought abundance.[34]

I have avoided the debate on the "universal flood" as a transversal theme in ancient Mesopotamian literature,[35] since this is a debate on myth and literature, which are not exactly the aims of this paper. However, it is important to emphasize how the flood conveys the idea of vastness, fluidity and spread, since it contains the same signs of water.[36] Therefore, as said in the beginning of this paper, it predates any kind of myth or literary tradition, as the idea of the flood was present in the subconscious of the community living under its potential effects.

To sum up, there is a group of signs within the symbol of the river that give the flood a negative value, basically describing it as a calamity that leaves nothing untouched:

107. a-ma-ru ki al ak-e šu im-ur$_3$-ur$_3$-re
108. ud gal-gin$_7$ ki-a mur mi-ni-ib-ša$_4$ a-ba-a ba-ra-e$_3$ (LSUr ll. 107–108)
107. "The flood, a working hoe on the ground, wipes away everything.
108. Like a great storm it roared over the earth; who could escape it?"[37]

It is important to stress the duality of this symbol; it may be negative depending on its effect on the landscape. For example, the river brings sediment that serves as source of

33 Civil 1997. This translation makes more sense than 'carp flood'.
34 Cf. Nanna L ll. 21–23. Cf. the words of Enlil that is an early flood that brings prosperity in Enlil A ll. 151.
35 See Fleming 2003.
36 Cf. LUr ll. 116–117; *supra*.
37 Cf. Gudea E3/1.1.7.Cyl. A, col. viii ll. 23–25 (Edzard 199,7 74).

renewal and fertilisation for the fields, but if the silt exceeds the proper space and timing, the result is merely debris which only signifies abandonment.[38]

Problems with Literary Tradition. The Deceive of Lexical Meaning: Context

Art manifests a general social view. For this reason, Sumerian literature is the main source for "listening to the Sumerian interior voices", i. e. their cultural thinking, even when a given text is a translation from the Akkadian language. Speech is a fundamental part of what allows us to live a collective experience. As a means of expression, the literary art contains the analogical tools for converting information into precise meaning and at the same time provides ground for the expansion of symbolic language. In this sense, the following statement by Guevara[39] highlights my main argument regarding the literary expression of cultural reasoning, even though she is referring to the religious universe and its expressive manifestations: "Analogical reasoning entailed a sort of 'existential parallelism,' which permeated all aspects of life including visual and poetic expression and permitted the development of notions of art as sacred, as the repository of great powers, and as 'divine need and "art in Mesopotamia was anchored in analogical modes of thought and was pursued in conjunction with the agrarian priorities of the society: agriculture, animal husbandry, the construction of cities, conquest, monarchical government, and religion, for example."[40]

In her Ph.D. dissertation, Nancy Guevara[41] points out that agrarian imagery is, in fact, our main source for approaching the ancient Sumerians. Moreover, in terms of Sumerian interaction with the farming universe, modern rural experience is not so conceptually different, considering its traditional practice and its conceptualization in popular thought, probably because its practicalities, necessities and aims were not that different. In this sense, Van De Mieroop, in a very simple, but remarkable argument, noted that: "The ancient Babylonians who formulated lexical lists were sedentary agriculturalists and world history's first creators of an urban society, a form of society that has now become universally dominant. Thus, despite the enormous differences between our culture and theirs, we share basic interactions with the environment, natural or created, and we can recognize many of their associations as logical. For example, the classification of animals in Babylonian lexical lists overlaps with that of modern-day agricultural societies. We are not surprised when we see that the massive series Ura = ḫubullu in its first-millennium form devoted two tablets with about 400 entries each to animals grouped into domesticated (tablet 13) and wild (tablet 14) ones. They listed mostly four-legged animals that live

38 LUr ll. 269–270. Cf. Enlil A ll. 115–23; ETCSL c.4.05.1; Reisman 1970, 41–102; LSUr (ll.49–51, ll.127–130) for the effects of the absence of the flood and the image of crops, fruit and grass that cannot grow.

39 Guevara 2008, 62.

40 *Ibid.*, 61.

41 *Ibid.*

on land - birds and fish were dealt with separately in tablet 18 but included some other species like butterflies and flies among the wild animals."[42]

In other words, the Sumerian attitude toward the technicalities and practicalities of farming coincided in many ways with a Western tradition that is still practiced. Clearly, this is a minor coincidence resulting from common sense applied by ancient people – and common sense in natural matters tends to be transversal and universal.

Nevertheless, proving the relationship between language and social experience of the agricultural cosmos is an issue when the source is literature rather than empirical observation of the community. Literature is not the most reliable tool for such research, as the devices used in popular thought, language, literature and metaphoric language are quite hard to connect and contextualize.[43] However, it is the main surviving source for agricultural images, cultural context, and, consequently, abstract language. Metaphors can be representative of models of thinking: "Our cognitive ability to interpret the world around us is largely based on metaphor and metonymy. Both of them let us see relations between unknown and known, remote and near, invisible and visible, based essentially on similarity and contiguity between concepts."[44] By understanding the processes involved in creating a metaphor, we can identify certain elements of linguistic thought in a literary culture and, at the same time, relate this to a specific context that serves as the source for signs of meaning.[45]

As already noted, the Sumerian language is not yet well known, even though it is quite understandable and has been studied by scholars for over a century. Hence, it is sometimes a challenge to argue that Sumerian could have been a literary language, for we have no reliable tools for dissecting the hermeneutics of Sumerian texts. However, the vast potential for metaphor in this language is undeniable and is clearly expressed in texts such as those which describe the relationship between the gods Dumuzi[46] and Inana.[47] In an artificially created and thematic corpus such as DI, it is easier to arrive at an interpretation of literary expression, although this may not be transposable to other texts. Therefore, caution is needed when considering the possible literal meaning of words and the global picture presented in a particular text must be examined, since the literal meaning of a word and the semantics of a narrated image may not coincide.[48] This can be deceptive, since the process of selecting words implies a description of an abstract concept using an objective lexeme that limits the semantic spectrum. Moreover, the "author" could have chosen the wrong words, resulting in a misleading interpretation.[49] It is also necessary to consider the idea

42 Van De Mieroop 2016, 66.
43 Liverani's 1996 on attempts to reconstruct the rural landscape of ancient Mesopotamia.
44 Raible 2016, 21–44
45 On semiotic aspects of metaphor, see Nöth 1985.
46 On Dumuzi, see Alster 1972, 9–15; Fritz 2003.
47 See Sefati 1998.
48 On literal and non-literal meaning in speech, see Gibbs and Colston 2006, 835–862.
49 Griffin and Ferreira 2006, 23–34. On "word production" and "word selection" in speech, *ibid.*, 23–60.

of the "literary code"[50] that tends to recreate meaning and is highly dependent on literary context, which cannot always be clearly identified in Sumerian literature.

For example, with regard to abstract concepts such as "richness",[51] "prosperity" and "beauty", any natural component of the agricultural cosmos can definitely carry symbolic meaning in a cultural context, although this is hard to identify in simple lexical lists such as those produced for the Sumerian language or in Akkadian thesauri with anachronistic definitions. It is necessary to look for the context of these ancient abstract concepts by identifying the images that were visually available to the original interlocutors, in order to obtain information about their objective meaning. Naturally, defining what objective information is also constitutes an interpretation. If there is an image of abundance in a landscape, this remains my interpretation: knowing about landscape and lush fruits and how valuable they can be to me, I am the one who identifies abundance in a concrete literary image and states that there is a kind a beauty in this richness (see appendix). However, since my preconceptions are based on signs of meaning, I would argue that my sensory interpretations are similar to those of the rustic Sumerians. However, can we realistically claim that this would have been the same for an interlocutor dependent on traditional Sumerian cultural standards? What would Sumerian people have considered beautiful? Firstly, what is factual beauty? Does its definition depends on cultural context? Ignoring the entire philosophical debate on aesthetics, plastic beauty is a manifestation of visual pleasure. Thus, if something announces a kind of richness and a secure, peaceful life, there is beauty in its essence, since if it was transformed into a picture, it would be an enjoyable scene. In what essential way could this process have been different for Sumerian people or the interlocutors of Sumerian texts? I believe it was similar, since this kind of reasoning is profoundly human and simply depends on experience of the natural world, empathy and common sense. Hence, considering these kinds of associations between abstract ideas and linguistic meaning, it can definitely be claimed that metaphor has a place in the farming landscape, namely the same type of metaphor used for phallic objects or, in other words, the same linguistic resource that transforms an object into an obvious abstract meaning. It can definitely be stated that some texts contain manifestations of beauty or richness, probably because they are part of a cultural matrix (DI A ll. 51–56). In the agricultural cosmos, beauty and ugliness come from an aesthetic conceptualisation of an abstract landscape based on common sense.

Conclusions

Visual Symbols for Signs

As they are based on agricultural imagery, concepts expressed through symbolic language, such as richness, fertility, abundance and prosperity, are made up of signs of meaning ac-

50 On literary codification and semiotic systems, I have followed Eco 1998.
51 See Appendix.

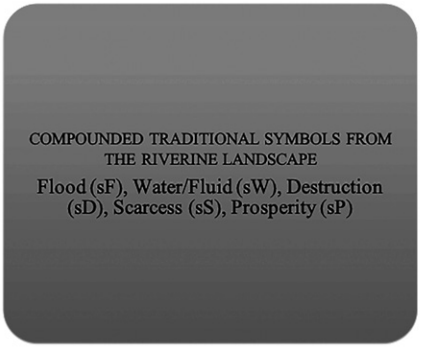
quired by observation of the natural world. These signs of meaning are simple semantic references based on an empirical visualization of the surrounding cosmos. Signs such as "quantity", "variety", "work", "growth", "crops" and "production" are the basis for these symbols and are spontaneously understood by any interlocutor familiar with the farming cosmos. In this sense, semiotics may be a very useful tool, not only for a better reading of literature written in a given language whose lexicon may be ambiguously decontextualized, but also for approaching the voices of the "silent people" whose language would have been based on the same cosmos that provides meanings for the symbolic language of literature.

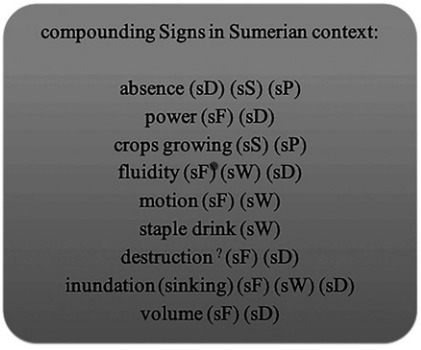
Final Remarks: the Creation of Semiotic Data Bases as a Source for Deciphering Meaning

Definitely, the production of a semiotic data base list of signs of meaning that could be used to export interpretations of symbols from/into different cultural/historical contexts should be considered for collaborative projects on humanities by interdisciplinary groups. A list of signs of meaning with cross-referenced sources and symbols could improve substantial the capacity of generating reliable lexicons of ancient languages and at same time bring light to the study of contexts that cannot be reached. Prosopography tends to focus on administrative texts, however, semiotics could transform literary sources into potential prosopography sources also, that, instead of describing economic procedures, would reveal the abstract thought of the ancient peoples. The principle is simple: decomposing meaning into signs to be used for the reconstruction of fragmented textual information and hermeneutic value.

Appendix

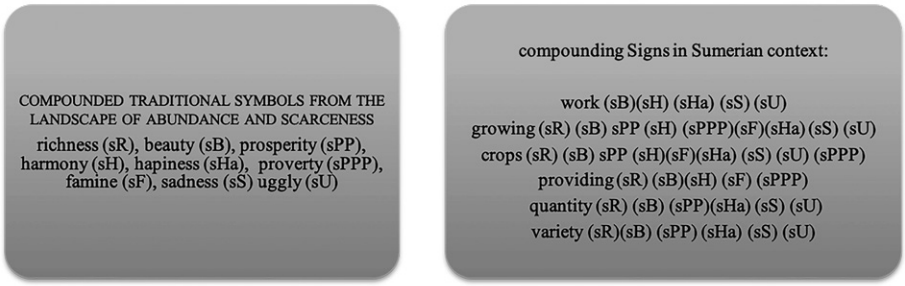
Signs of meaning from the riverine landscape in the literary sources:





Signs	Textual references
Production	*CT* 42 4 rev. iii 1–2; Išme-Dagan D ll. 24–26; DI D_1 ll. 60–63; CLAM 272–318, ll. c+153–4, CLAM 221–249, ll. c+279-c+280; Gudea E3 /1.1.7. CylB col. x ll. 16–23; LSUr ll. 498–502; Rīm-Sîn G ll. 31–33; Nanna L ll. 21–23; *Enlil and Ninlil* ll. 91–99
Absence	LUr ll. 144–146, 269–270; *Hymn to Enlil* ll. 115–23; LSUr ll. 49–51, ll. 127–130.
Power	Inana B ll.9–12; CLAM 123–137, ll. 15–24; CLAM 271–288, ll. B+93-b+101; CLAM 319–332, 1–14, 28–98; LSUr l.73, ll. 76–78, ll. 405; Nungal A ll. 31–33; Cooper 1978 l.119; Išme-Dagan S l. 13; Gudea E3/1.1.7.CylA col. xv ll.24–26; CA ll.149–151
Crops Growing	DumDr ll.131–132, ll. 138–143; DI D_1 ll. 60–63; LSUr ll. 498–502; *Blessings of Kesh*, *CT* 36 col. iii, II. 13, 15, 19, 21, 23; ETCSL c.1.1.3 ll. 259–60; ETCSL c.1.6.2 ll. 359–62
Fluidity	LSUr l.73, ll. 76–78, ll. 107–8, 216–217, ll. 293–294, ll. 389–391; Inana B ll.9–12; Išme-Dagan S ll. 13–15; CLAM 123–137, ll. 15–24; CLAM 120–151, ll. 15–25; CLAM 271–288, ll. B+93-b+101; CLAM.106, ll. b+253–254; CLAM 319–332, 1–14, 28–98; CA ll. 149–151; Nungal A ll. 31–33; Angim l.119; Gudea E3/1.1.7.CylA col. xv ll.24–26); Nanna L ll. 21–23
Motion	LSUr ll. 389–391, ll. 405; Išme-Dagan S ll. 13–15; CLAM 123–137, ll. 15–24; CLAM 106, ll. b+253–254; CLAM 271–288, ll. 34–35; CLAM 319–332, 1–14, 28–98
Drink (Irrigation)	Angim l. 171; *hoe and plough* l. 157–158
Destruction ?	Inana B ll.9–12; CLAM 106, ll. b+253–254; CLAM 120–151, ll. 15–25; p. 271–288, ll. 34–35; CLAM 319–341, ll. f+164; LSUr ll. ll. 107–8, ll. 127–130, 405; LUr ll. 49–51, ll. 98–99, ll. 144–146, l. 197, ll. 269–270; Gudea E3/1.1.7.CylA, col. viii ll. 26–27; *Hymn to Enlil* ll.115–23
Inundation (Sinking)	CLAM 120–151, ll. 15–25; CLAM 271–288, ll. 34–35; CLAM 319–341, ll. f+164; Cooper 1978, l.119; LSUr ll. 405; Išme-Dagan S l. 13; Gudea E3/1.1.7.CylA col. xv ll.24–26
Volume/ Quantity	CLAM 106, ll. b+253–254; CLAM 195–199, ll.33–38; CLAM 271–288, ll. 34–35; CLAM 319–341, ll. f+164; DI D_1 ll. 60–63; Nungal A ll. 31–33

Signs of meaning from abundance and natural beauty:



Signs	Textual references
Work	DI A ll. 51–56; Enlil A ll. 109–123; DI I 23–28; CA ll. 256–280; LUr ll. 271–274
Growing	*Summer and Winter* ll.19–25; CA ll. 157–175; Išme-Dagan S ll. 4–7; DI T ll. 2–8; EnlSud ll.156–166; UrN D (Ur Version) ll.32–38; LUr ll. 3–11, ll. 38–44; LSUr ll.49–51, ll.85–91, ll. 123–132, ll. 271–274, ll. 303–317; Enlil A ll. 109–123; CA ll. 170–175, CA ll. 222–236, ll.245–255; *Enlil and Ninlil* ll. 143–150; DI A ll. 2–10; DI D ll. 4–11; DI F ll.1–16, 29–32; DI O ll. 15–30; DI W ll. 7–34; E1.14.20.1, col. iii ll.22–31; E3/1.1.7.CylB col. xv ll. 1–4; ELA ll. 551–555, ll. 596–599; *Enki and the World Order* ll. 52–60; Ninurta F ll. 1–11
Crops	*Summer and Winter* ll.19–25; DI A ll. 51–56; DI D ll. 4–11; DI F ll. 29–32; DI O ll. 15–30; DI R ll. 5–8; DI T ll. 2–8; CA ll. 12–18, 25–28, ll. 37–39, ll. 46–56, ll. 157–175, ll. 222–236, ll.245–255; Išme-Dagan S ll. 4–7; EnlSud ll.103–123, ll.156–166; Rīm-Sîn G ll.1–10, 11–21; DumDr ll. 110–114; *The song of the ploughing oxen: an ululumama to Ninurta* ll. 14–37; DumDr ll. 136–139, ll. 142–143; *Sheep and Grain* ll. 190–191; UrN D (Ur Version) ll.32–38; LUr ll. 3–11, ll. 38–44, ll. 251–253, ll. 266–268, ll. 275–276; LSUr ll.49–51, ll.85–91, ll. 123–132, ll. 303–317; Enlil A ll. 109–123; *Ninurta's exploits: a* šir-sud *(?) to Ninurta* ll. 358–367; *Enlil and Ninlil* ll. 143–150; DI A ll. 2–10; DI B ll. 7–9; DI F1 ll. 11–20; CLAM 195–199, ll. a+51-a+52; E1.14.20.1, col. iii ll.22–31; ELA ll. 596–599, ll. 619–625; *Nanna-Suen's journey to Nibru* ll. 186–97, ll. 294–305; *Enki and the World Order* ll. 52–60; Ninurta F ll. 1–11; *Enemani Ilu Ilu - His Word Is a Wail, a Wail!* ll. 13–17; SP 3.23; E3/1.1.7.StB, col. iii 12–19+col. iv 1–13; E3/1.1.7.CylB col. xv ll. 1–4; *Ewe and Grain* ll. 1–36
Providing	DI F ll.9–16; DI A ll. 51–56; DI O ll. 15–30; DI R ll. 1–11; DI W ll. 7–34; DI T ll. 2–8; *Summer and Winter* ll.19–25; CA ll. 12–18, ll. 25–28, ll. 37–39, ll. 157–175; EnlSud ll.103–123, ll.156–166; Rīm-Sîn G ll.1–10; *The song of the ploughing oxen: an ululumama to Ninurta* ll.14–37; DumDr ll. 136–139, ll. 142–143; UrN D (Ur Version) ll.32–38; LUr ll. 3–11, ll. 38–44, ll. 251–253, ll. 271–274; Enlil A ll. 109–123; *Ninurta's exploits: a* šir-sud *(?) to Ninurta* ll. 358–367; *Enlil and Ninlil* ll. 143–150; E1.14.20.1, col. Iii ll.22–31; E3/1.1.7.CylB col. xv ll. 1–4; *Nanna-Suen's journey to Nibru* ll. 186–97, ll. 294–305; *Enki and the World Order* ll. 52–60; Ninurta F ll. 1–11; *Ewe and Grain* ll. 1–36

Signs	Textual references
Quantity	*Summer and Winter* ll.19–25; DI A ll. 2–10, ll. 51–56; DI R ll. 1–11; DI O ll. 15–30; DI T ll. 2–8; DI W ll. 7–34; CA ll. 25–28, ll. 37–39, ll. 46–56, ll. 157–175; Išme-Dagan S ll. 4–7; EnlSud ll.103–123, ll. 159–166; Rīm-Sîn G ll.1–10; *Sheep and Grain* ll. 190–191; UrN D (Ur Version) ll. 32–38; LSUr ll.85–91, ll. 123–132; Enlil A ll. 109–123; *Ninurta's exploits: a* šir-sud *(?) to Ninurta*, ll. 358–367; E1.14.20.1, col. Iii ll.22–31; ELA ll. 551–555, ll. 596–599; *Nanna-Suen's journey to Nibru* ll. 186–97, ll. 294–305; *Enki and the World Order* ll. 52–60; Ninurta F ll. 1–11; Gudea E3/1.1.7.StB, col. iii 12–19+col. iv 1–13
Variety	*Ninurta's exploits: a* šir-sud *(?) to Ninurta* ll. 358–367; DI R ll. 1–11; DI B ll. 7–9; DI W ll. 7–34; ELA ll. 596–599; Ninurta F ll. 1–11

Bibliography

Adams, R.M. 1981, *Heartland of cities: Surveys of ancient settlement and land use on the central floodplain of the Euphrates*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Alster, B. 1972, *Dumuzi's dream. Aspects of oral poetry in a Sumerian myth*, Copenhagen: Akademisk Forlag, D.B.K.

Black, J. 2002, "The Sumerians in Their Landscape", in: T. Jacobsen – I.T. Abusch (eds), *Riches hidden in secret places: Ancient Near Eastern studies in memory of Thorkild Jacobsen*, Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 41–61.

Brown, H.I. 2007, *Conceptual systems* (1st ed.), London: Routledge.

Chen, Y.S. 2013, *The primeval flood catastrophe: Origins and early development in Mesopotamian traditions* (1st ed.), Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Civil, M. 1997, "The instructions of Ur-Ninurta: A New Fragment", *AuOr* 15, 43–53.

Cobley, P. (ed) 2010, *The Routledge companion to semiotics,* London: Routledge.

Cohen, M.E. 1988, *The Canonical Lamentations of Ancient Mesopotamia: Vol. I,* Maryland: Capital Decisions Limited.

Eco, U. 2002, *Trattato di semiotica generale* (18 ed), Milano: Bompiani.

Edzard, D.O. 1997, *Gudea and his dynasty,* Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

Fleming, D.E. 2003, "Ur: After the Gods Abandoned Us", *The Classical World*, *97*/1, 5–18.

Frayne, D. 1998, "New Light on the Reign of Isme-Dagän", *Zeitschrift Für Assyriologie* 88, 7–44.

Fritz, M.M. 2003, *"- und weinten um Tammuz": Die Götter Dumuzi-Ama'ušumgal'anna und Damu,* Münster: Ugarit-Verlag.

Gibbs, R.W. – Colston, H.L. 2006, "Figurative Language", in: M.J. Traxler – M.A. Gernsbacher (eds), *Handbook of psycholinguistics* (2nd ed.), Boston: Elsevier.

Griffin, Z.M. – Ferreira, V.S. 2006, "Properties of Spoken Language", in: M.J. Traxler – M.A. Gernsbacher (eds), *Handbook of psycholinguistics* (2nd ed., pp. 21–60), Boston: Elsevier.

Guevara, N. 2008, *Before art: The fusion of religion, sexuality, and aesthetics in agrarian Mesopotamia*, PhD Thesis, New York: City University of New York.
Hallo, W.W. – van Dijk, J.J.A. 1968, *The Exaltation of Inanna,* London: Yale University Press.
Hallo, W.W. – Younger, K.L. (eds) 2003, *The Context of Scripture,* Leiden: Brill.
Iser, W. 2000, "What Is Literary Anthropology? The Difference between Explanatory and Exploratory Fictions", in: M. Clark (ed), *Revenge of the aesthetic: The place of literature in theory today*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 157–179.
Klein, J. 1976, "Šulgi and Gilgameš: Two Brother-Peers (Šulgi O)", in: S.N. Kramer – B.L. Eichler – J.W. Heimerdinger – Å.W. Sjöberg (eds), *Kramer anniversary volume: Cuneiform studies in honor of Samuel Noah Kramer*, Kevelaer: Butzon & Bercker, 271–292.
Lakoff, G. – Johnson, M. 1980, "Conceptual Metaphor in Everyday Language", *The Journal of Philosophy* 77/8, 453 (https://doi.org/10.2307/2025464)
Leick, G. 2003, *Sex and eroticism in Mesopotamian literature* (Paperbackausg), London: Routledge.
Liverani, M. 1996, "Reconstructing the Rural Landscape of the Ancient Near East", *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 39/1, 1–41.
Lorusso, A.M. 2015, *Cultural Semiotics,* New York: Palgrave Macmillan US (https://doi.org/10.1057/9781137546999)
Nöth, W. 1985, "Semiotic aspects of metaphor", in: W. Paprotté – R. Dirven, (eds), *The Ubiquity of metaphor: Metaphor in language and thought,* Amsterdam: J. Benjamins, 1–16.
Preucel, R.W. 2006, *Archaeological semiotics,* Malden, Mass: Blackwell.
Raible, W. 2016, "Metaphors as Models of Thinking", in: F. Horn – C. Breytenbach (eds), *Spatial metaphors: Ancient texts and transformations*, Berlin: Edition Topoi, 21–44.
Reisman, D. 1970, *Two Neo-Sumerian Royal Hymns*, PhD Thesis, University of Pennsylvania (https://repository.upenn.edu/dissertations/AAI7101620)
Richlin, A. 1992, *The garden of Priapus: Sexuality and aggression in Roman humor* (Rev. ed), Oxford: Oxford University Press.
Samet, N. (ed) 2014, *The lamentation over the destruction of Ur,* Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns.
Sefati, Y. 1998, *Love songs in Sumerian literature: Critical edition of the Dumuzi–Inanna songs,* Ramat Gan: Bar_Ilan University Press.
Silva, V.M.A.e. 1997, *Teoria da literatura. Vol. 1:* (8. ed, 10. reimpr), Coimbra: Livr. Almedina.
Stern, J. 2008, "Metaphor, Semantics, and Context", in: R.W. Gibbs (ed), *The Cambridge handbook of metaphor and thought*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 262–279
Van De Mieroop, M. 2016, *Philosophy before the Greeks: The Pursuit of Truth in Ancient Babylonia,* Princeton/Oxford: Princeton University Press.
Vanstiphout, H.L.J. 2003, *Epics of Sumerian kings: The matter of Aratta* (J. S. Cooper, Ed), Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature.
Varriano, J. 2005 "Fruits and Vegetables as Sexual Metaphor in Late Renaissance Rome", *Gastronomica*, 5/4, 8–14.

"Squeezing" Like Oil from a Sesame Seed: On the Conceptual Background of Metaphoric Expressions in Akkadian Diplomatic Texts Originating from Ḫatti

Lisa Wilhelmi (Freie Universität Berlin)

Introduction

In their important and influential study on the use of metaphors and imagery in daily communications, Lakoff and Johnson sketch a picture of the fact that metaphors are not a simple means of communication but that, as indicated by the title of the work, they represent a framework that "we live by."[1] That is to say that they are not only shaped by our environment, perception and cultural context, but that they themselves possess agency in shaping our understanding of the interconnectivity of aspects and spheres of our lives. And, as Knowles and Moon point out in *Introducing Metaphor* the force and vigour that is achieved through metaphoric speech more often than not is due to the fact that metaphors actually represent a fairly imprecise, or to use their words, "fuzzy" way of communication; one that leaves much to the imagination, interpretation and evaluation of the individual, thus creating a resonance chamber that conjures up powerful associations and emotions while at the same time avoiding too explicit a formulation that could exclude this ambiguity.[2]

Translating Metaphoric Speech

While metaphoric concepts can be shared across cultural and linguistic borders, their concrete idiomatic implementations and manifestations in metaphoric speech are often intrinsically linked to a given language and these do not always translate easily. That is to say some metaphors are universal and appear so apparent to human consciousness that they are used in similar ways and are mutually intelligible for people with disparate geographic, temporal and linguistic background – this is often the case for such references that allude

1 Lakoff and Johnson 1980.
2 Knowles and Moon 2006, 12.

to body parts and the like. Less so are cultural metaphors that are more closely bound to experience, environment and history of a particular culture and/or linguistic prerequisites.

The limitations of metaphoric speech can be demonstrated vividly when comparing the introduction to Lakoff and Johnson's work in the original (English) publication and its German translation: The first semantic field that serves as an example to illustrate the effervescent nature of metaphors in our conceptual thinking are the idiomatic expressions used in the (American) English language to describe arguments, many of which conjure up images of warfare, and the authors point out that this, in turn, has shaped our conception of arguments to the extent that we are unable to conceive of a type of discussion that does not present itself as a series of onslaughts, withdrawals, and, ultimately, a winner and a loser.[3]

While this certainly holds true, the given examples show that although there is a common conceptual background to the metaphoric expressions used in both languages, the linguistic realisation of specific turns of phrase is not necessarily identical and the German expressions do not always offer a literal translation of the English idioms.

Argument is war

Your claims are *indefensible*.
He *attacked every weal point* in my argument.
His criticisms were *right on target*.
I *demolished* his argument.
I've never *won* an argument with him.
You disagree? Okay, *shoot!*
If you use that *strategy*, he'll *wipe you out*.
He *shot down* all of my arguments.[4]

Argumentieren ist Krieg

Ihre Behauptungen sind *unhaltbar*.
Er *griff jeden Schwachpunkt* in meiner Argumentation an.
Seine Kritik *traf ins Schwarze*.
Ich *schmetterte* sein Argument *ab*.
Ich habe noch nie eine Auseinandersetzung mit ihm *gewonnen*.
Sie sind anderer Meinung? Nun, *schießen Sie los*!
Wenn du nach dieser *Strategie* vorgehst, wird er dich *vernichten*.
Er *macht* alle meine Argumente *nieder*.[5]

3 Lakoff and Johnson 1980, 4.
4 *Ibid*.
5 Lakoff and Johnson, transl. Hildenbrand 1997, 12.

In the following chapter the authors explore the metaphor that is coined by the equation of time with money, illustrating the perception that time can be spent or saved, borrowed or lent, used more or less profitably, or wasted. Among the 16 expressions given as examples here, there is undoubtedly some overlap in the conceptual backdrop, but there are a number of German "translations" that do not conform to the conceptual framework: they do not only not present literal translations of the English expressions, but they do not actually reference the same metaphor.

Time is money

You're *wasting* my time.
This gadget will *save* you hours.[6]
I don't *have* the time to *give* you.
How do you *spend* your time these days?
That flat tire *cost* me an hour.
I've *invested* a lot of time in her.
I don't *have enough* time to *spare* for that.
You're *running out* of time.
You need to *budget* your time.
Put *aside* some time for ping pong.
Is that *worth your while*?
Do you *have* much time *left*?
He's living on *borrowed* time.
You don't *use* your time *profitably*.
I *lost* a lot of time when I got sick.
Thank you for your time.

Zeit ist Geld.

Sie *vergeuden* meine Zeit.
Dieses Gerät wird Ihnen viel Zeit *ersparen*.
Ich *habe* keine Zeit zu *verschenken*.
Wie *geht* man heutzutage mit seiner Zeit *um*?
Dieser platte Reifen *kostet* mich eine Stunde.
Ich habe viel Zeit in diese Frau *investiert*.
Ich habe keine Zeit zu *verlieren*.
Ihnen wird die Zeit *knapp*.
Du mußt mit deiner Zeit *haushalten*.
Nimm dir Zeit zum Tischtennisspielen.
Lohnt sich das zeitliche für dich?

6 Lakoff and Johnson 1980, 7–8

Haben Sie noch viel Zeit?
Seine Tage sind *gezählt*.
Du nutzt deine Zeit nicht *optimal*.
Ich habe durch meine Krankheit viel Zeit *verloren*.
Danke für die Zeit, die Sie sich für mich *genommen* haben.[7]

The stock phrase "time is money" is said to have been coined by Benjamin Franklin in 1748 in association with the nascent industrialisation and the rise of capitalism in North America and there seems to be a need to explore the context in which the metaphor first became productive in German and to what extent those German language expressions that do reference the metaphor are to be traced back to cultural transfer, displacing an existent metaphor of time lexicalised in these language before this influence.

The validity of this TIME IS MONEY metaphor in modern languages other than English is also questioned by Enrico Monti in his comparative study of three translations of Lakoff and Johnson's work into French, Spanish and Italian respectively, with similar results: while some expressions are perfectly equivalent to the ones in use in American English the metaphor appears to be less productive in these Romance languages.[8] In fact, his conclusions show that there is a much more consistent overlap in the metaphoric conceptualisation of time in German on the one hand and French, Spanish and Italian on the other, while the metaphor behind the English language expressions appears to be quite singular: expressions featuring the verbs "opfern" (German), "consacrer" (French), "dédicar" (Spanish) and "dedicare" (Italian) suggest a whole different conceptual background rooted in the voluntary act of giving something for the good of someone/something else.

The lack of correspondence in these modern translations make for a compelling point of departure as they illustrate that, while there is a shared conceptual background of the wider metaphor in the first case, this is filled with different concrete images in the two languages. In the second case the metaphor does not actually seem to be of so much significance at all and different concepts form the background of the existing metaphoric expressions. Enrico Monti's comparative study of the translations of Lakoff and Johnson's book into the three different, but closely related languages, shows that there are significant differences in the resulting books that are largely due to the individual approaches towards translation,[9] which demonstrates that *Metaphors We Live By* is a book deeply rooted in the American English culture and that metaphorical expressions, while surrounding us and influencing our daily lives, do not always translate easily. Rather, as Monti quotes from the introduction to the Italian edition: a whole different book would have to be written in any given language in order to sketch out the conceptual framework of the associated culture that has brought forth its conceptual metaphoric idioms.[10]

7 Lakoff and Johnson, transl. Hildenbrand 1997, 16.
8 Monti 2009, 214.
9 *Ibid*., 209–210.
10 *Ibid*., 210.

Translating Conceptual Metaphors

The above examples of idiomatic expressions relating time to money that do appear in the various other languages and have found entry into the spoken idiom, can serve as an example of loan translations that have formed what authors Samaniego Fernández, Valesco Sacristán and Fuertes Olivera call "new conceptual structures and networks"[11]. In an article with the title "Translations we live by: the impact of metaphor translation on target systems", they examine strategies for translating metaphors from one language to another. Using the headlines of a number of articles translated from the English language newspaper *The Guardian* for the Spanish *El Mundo del Siglo XXI* as an example, they are able to show that in cases that made use of metaphors, images or references anchored in the source language but alien to the target language the translators did not translate literally or even conceptually, but instead used metaphors inherent in the target culture that were able to best captivate the audience's attention, with the result that source text and target text could have little to nothing in common.

Table 1: Samanego Fernández – Velasco Sacristán – Fuertes Olivera, 2005, 64

Text no.	ST	TT
22	Sgotgun wedding of the year thrills beleaguered Serbia	La bella y el bestia *[Beauty and the beast]*
29	Politically incorrect moments of a timeless rebel	La cara racista del Che Cuevara *[Che Cuevara's racist face]*
56	Guess who came to dinner	Un triángulo amoroso con dudosas esquinas *[A fuzzy-cornered love triangle]*
70	The X files	Cobayas humanas en el Reino Unido *[Humans used as guinea pigs in the UK]*
78	US team finds gold-laden Japanese submarine 51 years after sinking	La joya hundida *[The sunken jewel]*
79	Dances with turkeys	Con el aguq al cuello *[up to one's neck]*
93	Saddam's enemy within	El clan sanguinario *[The bloodthirsty clan]*
98	I homage to Dallas	Perot vuelve a la carga *[perot returns to the attack]*
108	The priest, the Angel of Death and the whispered distress of a small Irish town	El "gatillazo" del padre Kennedy *[Big disappointment in Father Kennedy]*

11 Samaniego Fernández, Valesco Sacristán and Fuertes Olivera 2005.

Text no.	ST	TT
114	Olympic coach jailed for rapes	Un violador al borde de la piscina *[Rapist by swimming pools]*
120	The ways of the words	Cuando el mundo sea una red *[When the world becomed a web]*
132	19 more Ogonis face hanging as Nigerian major shows who's boss	Golpean a quienes guardan luto *[Beatings for the mourning]*

They conclude that this approach to translation presents a shift from the more traditional and theoretical model that takes the source language as a standard to be upheld also in the translation, resulting in such loan translations. In fact, the translations of the title of Lakoff and Johnson's book opted for in the various language editions and puzzled over by Enrico Monti present just such a case: they reflect the dilemma between translating a metaphor and using a catchy phrase as a book title that will help increase sales.[12]

In turn, this means that when there is no free, "associative" translation process metaphors can be transplanted from one cultural or linguistic background to another and thus result in imported metaphors that are created by the direct transfer of metaphoric expressions and will give rise to new idiomatic expressions that become embedded within the target language and alter or expand its contextual framework.

However, this is something that is usually applicable to the translation of a fixed source text that is transferred to a different language, and it is part of the mechanism that Jens Braarvig describes as the "Dependent Languages" pattern, namely the impact that translations, especially of iconic or religious texts, can have on a given language, its culture and its conceptual repertoire.[13] The composition of a new text in a language that is not the composer's native language, however, is a different process and does not have the same force to leave a perceivable imprint. Rather than a "passive", receiving process these are "active", creationary acts and although the mechanisms of translation, like the quest for an expression or syntactic structure in the target language that matches that of the source language as closely as possible, can be similar, their impetus is different, as the audience of the text tends to be native speakers of the target language and thus metaphoric idioms not standard to the language will be noted, puzzled over, either understood or not, but ultimately forgotten about.

When reading through the Hittite treaty texts that are written in Akkadian language it becomes apparent that a whole myriad of universal metaphors are used with regard to the relationship between kings and other rulers, which are based mainly on body parts –

12 cf. Monti 2009, 211–212, who after deliberating the difference in translating the phrase "live by" within the study and the book title respectively, does consider that the choice for the latter may have been down to the publisher rather than the translator.

13 Braarvig 2008.

such as "(to) be in someone's hands" (which can be a positive or a negative thing),[14] "(to) fall at someone's feet",[15] or "(to) be/fight by someone's side."[16] In all likelihood, these metaphors did not require a shared cultural narrative but rather appealed (just like they still do today) to general human perception, and it is these sorts of metaphors that we also find depicted in the narrative of monumental, state issued, works of art from the Neo-Assyrian period.[17] The expressions used in the texts in Akkadian language are not only perfectly equivalent to ones known from the texts in Hittite language, but they are also known and comprehensible to a wider audience. It is impossible to determine if their implementation was due to conscious choice that involved a reflection on the part of the Hittite scribe considering if a given expression was idiomatic in the Akkadian language too or whether this overlap went unnoticed. However, the point of comparison of syntactic constructions used in Boğazköy Akkadian texts suggests that scribes gave preference to constructions in the target language that had an equivalent in their native language and thus appealed on the basis of their familiarity. Interestingly enough, the mechanisms of translation and/or equation between the two languages become most apparent when these present us with errors or inaccuracies rather than with a perfect rendition in the target language.

Lost in Translation?

Rather than adding to the reconstruction of the conceptual framework the Hittites operated in, which is at the very core of a research project lead by Marta Pallavidini at the

14 Cf. e.g.: ^{I}*šat-ti-ú-a-za* DUMU ^{I}*tu-uš-rat-*ʳ*ta*ˀ *i-na* ʳŠUˀ*-ia aṣ-ṣa-bat-ma* DUMU.MUNUS *a-na* DAM-*ut-ti-šu at-ta-din-*ʳ*šu*ˀ "I took Šattiwaza, the son of Tušratta with my hand and I gave him [my] (text: the) daughter as his wife" (KBo 1.1, Obv. 58 – treaty between Šuppiluliuma I and Šattiwaza of Mittani).

15 Cf. e.g.: ʳ*ù*ˀ ^{d}UTU-*šu* LUGAL GAL *ki-i*[*t-t*]*a* / ʳ*ša* ^{I}*níq^{iq}-ma-an-da i-ta-mar-*ʳ*ma ki-i*ˀ / ʳ^{I}*níq^{iq}*ˀ*-ma-an-da it-tal-ka a-*ʳ*na*ˀ *šu-*ʳ*pa-li*ˀ / ʳGÌRˀ.MEŠ *ša-a* ^{d}UTU-*ši* LUGAL GAL EN-*šu / im-ta-qú-ut* "And the Sun, the Great King saw the loyalty of Niqmaddu, when Niqmaddu came and fell at the feet (literally: under the feet) of My Sun, the Great King, his lord" (RS 17.373, Rev. 6–10 – decree issued by Šuppiluliuma I for Niqmaddu II of Ugarit regarding his tribute payments), or the fragmentary: ^{I}*a-zi-ra* LU[GAL KUR ^{uru}*a-mur-ri* ...] / [*š*]*a* KUR ^{uru}*mi-iṣ-ri-i it-nu-ma a-na šu-pa-al* GÌR.MEŠ ^{I}*šu-up-pí-lu-*[*li-u-ma a-bi*] ʳ*a-bi-ia*ˀ [...] "Aziru, the ki[ng of Amurru] revoked [... o]f Egypt and [...] at (lit. under) the feet of Šuppilu[liuma] my [grand]father" (KBo 1.8+, Obv. 4–5 – historical introduction to the treaty between Ḫattušili III and Bentešina of Amurru).

16 Cf. e.g.: e-nu-ma ^{I}GUR-^{d}IM LUGAL KUR *mu-kiš ù* ^{Id}*IM-ni-ra-ri* / LUGAL KUR *nu-ḫa-aš-ši ù* ^{I}*a-gít-*^{d}IM LUGAL ^{uru}*ni-i / ul-tu le-et* ^{d}UTU-*ši* LUGAL GAL EN-*šu-nu* KÚR *ù* ÉRIN.MEŠ-*šu-nu / up-te-ḫé-ru* "When Itur-Adad, the king of Mukiš, Adad-nirāri, the king of Nuḫhašši and Akit-Teššob, the king of Niya moved away from the side of My Sun, the Great King, their lord and they assembled their troops" (RS 17.340, Obv. 2–5 – treaty between Šuppiluliuma I and Niqmaddu of Ugarit).

17 The so-called Black Obelisk comes to mind, that includes five carvings in bas-relief that depict subjugated rulers kneeling before the Neo-Assyrian king Shalmaneser III with their heads at his feet.

FU Berlin,[18] the following focuses on some more obscure examples of figurative speech, whose origins are not so easily determined. The formulations that err from what might be expected or customary in Akkadian are used to explore whether the images conjured up were rooted in wider conceptual metaphors, whether it is possible to decide if these metaphors were conventional or creative, whether they were universally understood or culturally embedded, and if it is possible to make out a cultural background that could have anchored them.

The so-called Syrian treaties of the Hittite empire period kings represents a corpus of treaty texts concluded with principalities in Northern Syria after the collapse of the Mittanian hegemony and the large-scale conquests during the reign of Šuppiluliuma I that were renewed where necessary at later stages.[19] Embedded in historical narratives detailing the individual circumstances of subjugation leading to the conclusion of the treaties, these texts share an established body of stipulations with only slight variations that are largely concerned with loyalty and military aid. Prominent amongst these is the recurrent call to fight by the Hittite king's side *ina kul libbi* 'wholeheartedly'.[20] While the image to apply oneself to a task with all one's heart may sound perfectly familiar to the English, the German ("mit ganzem Herzen") or the French ("de tout cœur"), a comparable notion is not common in standard Akkadian.

When exploring the possibilities to reconstruct a Hittite equivalent that could have formed the basis of a loan translation resulting in this unusual phrase, the case of the Syrian treaties offers the fortunate situation that there are a number of tablets and fragments from the Hittite archives that provide draft texts offering the corresponding passages in Hittite language. However, although the chosen expression in the parallel texts is close enough, the Hittite *šakuwaššarit ištanzanit*[21] is not an exact parallel, as the vehicle

18 A synthesis of her preliminary observations concerning the use of these universal metaphors in Hittite texts and the fact that they are shared in the Hittite and the Akkadian language material from Boğazköy was presented at the Broadening Horizons conference in Berlin in the summer of 2019.

19 Treaties that are extant in (often fragmentary) manuscripts written in Akkadian language are the ones reflecting three generations of political relations with the rulers of Amurru (CTH 49, 62 and 92 – issued by Šuppiluliuma I, Muršili II and Ḫattušili III respectively) as well as Šuppiluliuma's treaty with Tette of Nuḫašše (*CTH* 53) and one concluded between Muršili II and Niqmepa of Ugarit (CTH 66). An earlier agreement with Ugarit (CTH 46 – Šuppiluliuma I and Niqmaddu II) takes a different form and it is a much shorter document, but it already includes some of the same phraseology.

20 Cf. [*šum-ma* ^{1}][*a*]*-zi-ra iš-tu* ÉRIN.MEŠ-*ś*[*u* / ^{giš}GIGIR.MEŠ-*šu ù i-na kúl* ŠÀ-*bi-šu la-a i-na-muš ù šum-ma i-na kúl*] ŠÀ-*bi-šu la-a in-ta-at-ḫa-a*[*ś*] "If Aziru does not set out together with his infantry and his chariotry wholeheartedly, and if he does not fight wholeheartedly!" (KUB 3.7+, Obv. 10–11) as well as the more fragmentary attestations: [*šum-ma* ^{1}*a-z*]*i-ra i-na kúl* ŠÀ-*bi-š*[*u / qa-du* ÉRIN.MEŠ^{giš}GIGIR.MEŠ-*šu la-a i-na-muš ù it-ti* ^{lú}KÚR *la-a in-t*]*a-ḫa-aṣ* (KUB 3.7+, Obv. 13–14); *šum-ma i-na kúl* ŠÀ-*šu la-a in-na-aḫ-ḫa-a*[*ś*] (KBo 1.4 Obv. II 19); *šum-ma* ^{1}*te-et-te i-na kúl* ŠÀ-*šu iš-tu* ÉRIN.MEŠ-[*šu*] / ^{giš}GIGIR.MEŠ-*šu ú-ul i-na-muš* (KBo 1.4, Obv. II 23–24); [...] / $^{r1?}$[...] ^{r}*iš-tu* ÉRIN$^{?}$.[MEŠ ... *kù*]*l* ŠÀ-^{r}*bi-ka ul ta*$^{?}$-[...] (RS 17.3338+, Obv. 19–20 // RS 17.353+, Obv. 20–22).

21 Cf. the Hittite draft version of the treaty with Aziru: ^{r}*ma*$^{?}$*-a-an zi-*^{r}*ik*$^{?}$ ^{1}*a-zi-ra-aš* / [*QA-DU*ERÍN.M]EŠ ANŠE.KUR.RA.MEŠ *ša-ku-wa-*^{r}*aš*$^{?}$*-ša-ri-*^{r}*it*$^{?}$ ZI-*ni-it* / [*Ú-UL ne*]*-ni-ik-ta-ti* [*n*]*a-an ša-ku-*^{r}*wa*$^{?}$-

of the metaphor is not the concrete noun 'heart' but rather the more elusive 'soul, self'.[22] A reverse scenario of interference, i.e. an imperfect translation of an otherwise unattested Akkadian idiom into Hittite can be excluded both on the basis that the combined characteristics of the text group establish the source language of the text as Hittite as well as the fact that the Hittite *šakuwaššarit ištanzanit* also occurs outside of this corpus: it is attested in the treaty concluded by Muršili II with Targasnalli of Ḫapalla,[23] and its use outside of a military context in a set of instructions for lords and overseers issued by Tudḫaliya IV demonstrates that it does not have to be understood as technical language in treaty texts only but that it had a wider scope of application.[24]

The only other attestation of the exact phrase as used in the Syrian treaties[25] appears to be in an Amarna letter sent to Amenhotep IV by Tušratta of Mittani: although the context is fragmentary it is clear that the expression is used to describe the arrangement of a marriage between a Hurrian princess and the addressee's father that, according to the letter, had been carried out *ina kul libbi*.[26] Although no corresponding formulation in Hurrian language is known, the fact that the Hurrian word *tiža* 'heart' seems to represent the center of emotion and features in expressions such as "(to) love in one's heart", "(to) not speak in a truthful manner from one's heart" leaves room for the possibility that such an expression existed.

Given the constant exchange between the scholarly elites of the Northern Syrian area and the Hittite capital that can be traced in the correspondence between scribal centers and the occasional inclusion of grammatical, lexical or syntactical idiosyncrasies associated with texts from one region in texts composed in another, it is very possible that the scribe issuing the translation of the "prototype", so-to-speak, translation for the Syrian treaties was aware of an expression that was in use in the area or that he took his inspira-

---

aš-ša-ʳriˀ-it / [*Ù*] *Ú-UL za-aḫ-ḫi-*[*i*]*a-ši* "If you, Aziru, [do not] mobilise [together with your infan]try and your cavalry whole-heartedly, [and] you do not fight!" (KBo 10.12+, Obv. II 21–22).

22 Note, however that CHD/Š-1, 63 – and, following this, see also my own translation in the footnote above – translates the phrase as "wholeheartedly", in itself an example for the rendition of a metaphorical expression of a source language with one well established in the target language but not literally equivalent, a frequent approach to translating ancient texts to make them more intelligible to the modern reader. An imperfect equation of Akkadian *libbu* with Hittite *ištanzana-* can be excluded here as the Sumerographic rendition shows a clear distinction: there is no overlap between the use of the signs ŠÀ and ZI in the texts from Boğazköy (Weeden 2011, 609, 649–650).

23 KBo 5.4, Rev. 29–30. Cf. Kitchen and Lawrence 2012, 500–501. Treaties concluded with Western Anatolian vassals did not exist in Akkadian versions as the necessities of communication did not apply here.

24 KUB 26.12, Rev. III 24–28. Cf. Miller 2013, 288–289.

25 A similar turn of phrase that uses a different head noun but can be understood as a lexical manifestation of the same conceptual metaphor and used within the same general context, namely military aid, is attested in a treaty between the Neo-Assyrian king Aššur-nirāri VI and a Northern Syrian principality by the name of Bīt-Agusi located North of Aleppo: *a-na ga-mur-ti* ŠÀ-*bi-šú la* È-*ni* "if he does not set out wholeheartedly" (Weidner 1932–33, 25, Rev. IV 3). While the large distance in time between both attestations urges towards caution, the geographic proximity is striking.

26 EA 29: 29: *i-na ku*$_8$*-ù-ul* ŠÀ-*š*[*u*] (Rainey 2015, 304–305).

tion from a document composed by a Hurrian scribe that he had access to. Employing the phrase, he thus would have rendered an expression rooted within a Hittite metaphoric concept, namely the requirement to apply all one's spirit to an alliance with a contextual translation that was similar but not identical.

Another curious case is the description of threatening behaviour of enemy countries as it is attested in the treaty concluded by Šuppiluliuma I with Niqmaddu II of Ugarit and the decree stipulating the payments of tribute associated with said treaty as well as the treaty of the same king with Tette of Nuḫašše, which must be slightly later than the other two documents and forms part of the group of the so-called Syrian treaties.[27] The general context of the situation is quite clear in all instances; however, the interpretation of the exact meaning of the expression differs. An examination of the relevant passages[28] shows that the forms have to be understood as belonging to the verb *ṣaḫāṭu*[29] and that they have to be translated as '(to) pressure', although the exact primary meaning of this verb is debated and the process of its association with political conflict eludes us. The attestations booked for the verb *ṣaḫāṭu* in CAD are all concerned with the extraction process of either oil from sesame seed or wine or juice from fruit, so that a translation '(to) press' should be upheld for the G stem.[30] How this verb of food production would have become used in the D stem to signify acute military pressure is far from certain, but it would not be the

27 Although the passages are translated differently on occasion – cf. e.g. Kitchen and Lawrence 2012, who seem to take the forms of the Tette treaty as coming from *šaḫāṭu* (409: 'he overcame', 411: 'attacks him') while assigning the attestation in the Niqmaddu treaty to *saḫāṭu* (461: 'terrorized') – the proximity in time, space and genre of the three texts in question is a very strong indicator that all forms can be considered attestations for the same expression. The heterogeneity in spelling and the fact that the forms in the Tette treaty seem to alternate between G and D stem demonstrates the difficulty the scribes were faced with in light of this unfamiliar idiom.

28 The Tette treaty preserves one attestation of a D stem form: *ù ki-i-me-e* / *ú-uṣ-ṣa-aḫ-ḫi-is-sú* (KBo 1.4, Obv. I 5–6). An apparent G stem form is used later in the same text in broken context: [...] *ma-am-ma iṣ-ṣa-aḫ-ḫa-sú* / [...] (Rev. III 1–2). Forms of the D stem are preserved in the texts sent to Ugarit: *ù* LUGAL.MEŠ KUR *nu-ḫaš ù* LUGAL KUR *mu-kiš* / ˡ*ni-*ʳ*iq*ˀ*-ma-an-da* LUGAL KUR *ú-ga-ri-it* / *ú-ṣa-aḫ* (KÚŠU)-*ḫa-tu-šu-*ʳ*ma*ˀ (RS 17.227, Obv. 7–9 // RS 17.373, Obv. 7–8 // RS 17.300, Obv. 7–8); ù KUR ^{uru}*u-ga-ri-it ú-*ʳ*ṣa*ˀ*-aḫ-ḫí-tu-ša* (RS 17.340, Obv. 6); LUGAL.E.NE ʳ*ú*ˀ*-ṣa-aḫ-ḫa-tu-ni-in*$_4$*-ni* (RS 17.340, Obv. 14).

29 The elusive nature of the expression is illustrated by the fact that it has been difficult to assign the forms to a lexeme. Labat 1932, 201, and 38 fn. 41, who, due to the structure of his book, only takes into account the attestations in KBo 1.4 suggests that these should be associated with *šaḫātu* D 'to frighten'. However, it is exactly those two attestations that show that the sibilant in question has to be interpreted as /ṣ/: in Akkadian texts written by Hittite scribes a seemingly unwarranted doubling of the phoneme /ṣ/ in the spelling is very common (cf. e.g. on the same tablet: in-du-uḫ-ḫa-aṣ-ṣa – Obv. II 25 and [*re-e*]*ṣ-ṣu-ti* – Rev. IV 9) and the scribe does actually distinguish in using the sign SA rather than ZA elsewhere for the phoneme /s/ (Obv. II 6: *sa-al-mi-ia*, *sa-lim*; Obv. II 13: *sa-al-mu*), which is in itself very uncommon but highlights the fact that he considered there to be a difference.

30 The suggestion that the translation '(to) press' should be abandoned considering the fact that sesame oil is extracted from the seed through boiling (CAD Ṣ, 61) must be disregarded not only on the basis of the figurative usage here which is evident from the context and would make little sense, but also due to the fact that sesame seeds can indeed be pressed in order to extract their oil.

only instance of a scribe manipulating the foreign language on the basis of their knowledge of its grammatical structure and in the process creating otherwise unattested forms. The image it creates, no doubt, is a powerful one and can be considered a vivid creative metaphor, even if no parallels for this imagery are preserved in other texts.

Another image of warfare, or rather lack thereof is conjured up in the treaty between Šuppiluliuma I and Šattiwaza of Mittani,[31] and with all likelihood the same phrase has to be restored in a broken passage in the treaty with Niqmaddu II of Ugarit.[32] Here, the turn of phrase *ḫāma u ḫuṣāba ul leqû* with the literal meaning "(to) not take a piece of chaff or a splinter of wood" signifies "(to) not take a single thing", i.e. to leave unscathed and not raided. Akkadian *ḫāmū* 'litter of leaves, reed etc.' and *ḫuṣābu* 'a cut off piece of wood, a chip of wood' are grouped together as a pair in the lexical series Erimḫuš,[33] which is known to also have been transmitted at Boğazköy,[34] and the passage containing ḫāmū and *ḫuṣābu* is actually amongst the parts of the composition that have been preserved on small fragments found at the Hittite capital.[35] Unfortunately, the Hittite column of the tablet is lost here, so that we have no information as to which words would have been considered as equivalent in the Hittite language. Given the few attestations of both lexemes used together outside of the lexical tradition it may take a step too far to speak of an idiom in the true sense for Mesopotamia,[36] but there was clearly a very strong association of the two that appears to have resonated with Hittite concepts. The fact that *ḫāmū*, which is a plural word in standard Akkadian, is used in an accusative singular in analogy with the

31 *ḫa-a-ma ù ḫu-uṣ-ṣa-ʾbá šaʾ* / KUR *mi-it-ta-an-ni ul il-qè* "He (the king of Ḫatti) did not take chaff or splinter from Mittani" (KBo 1.1, Obv. 51–52 // KBo 1.2, Obv. 32–33).

32 Unfortunately only [...] ḫu-ṣa-ba [...] survives in the passage in question and the text breaks off completely soon after (RS 17.340, Obv. 31).

33 Cavigneaux, Güterbock and Roth 1985, 37, entry 189–190. No doubt, the fact that the two entries are separated from what precedes and what follows by horizontal rulings is of significance in the consolidation of their association.

34 Veldhuis 2014, 276–279.

35 KUB 3.99, Rev. 4. As noted by Scheucher 2012, 650, n.r. 4' the surface of the tablet is badly damaged here and he is in doubt whether one can read the expected *ḫâmu* (sic!) here. In the transliteration he therefore reads *ḫa-ʾx-x-xʾ* / *ḫ*[*u-ṣ*]*a-bu*, indicating three damaged signs following ḪA in Rev. 3. However, judging from the photograph there does not seem to be any reason to doubt the reading of a damaged sign A or to assume more than three signs in total, as already proposed by Cavigneaux, Güterbock and Roth 1985, 121. Allowing for some damage the traces before the break can be consolidated with the initial horizontal of the sign MU, and there is a clear trace of a low *Winkelhaken*.

36 CAD Ḫ, 259 lists three very diverse attestations that do not seem to indicate a common idiom but rather a learned association of both words: besides the above cited example from the Šattiwaza Treaty, there is an example from a medical text that seems to provide an incantation for removing a foreign substance from the eye as well as the description of a mountain range in a short inscription of Sennacherib. In the latter *ḫāmū ḫuṣābu* do not seem to signify 'nothing', however, but rather their absence as types of plants is opposed to the presence of "mighty grapevines" (Luckenbill 1924, 156, 1–2: *šá bal-ṭi šá-ri-ʾ ḫa-a-mu ḫu-ṣa-bu i-na lib-bi* / *la-aš-šu-ni gu-up-ni dan-nu-ti šá e-ʾa-ri*) and in the medical text they are followed by "or something", so that it is clear that they as a pair cannot signify the entirety (Thompson 1923, 12, 1:50: [*ḫa*]*-a-mu ḫu-ṣa-ba u mim-ma ša* IGI.II *šu-li-i*). Note also that there is no consistency in the use of the copula between both elements.

following *ḫuṣāba* in the Šattiwaza treaty suggests that in Hittite these words were both countable nouns and that we are not looking at a completely fixed expression in standard Akkadian that was simply received and reproduced. The fact that *ḪA-A-MU Ù ḪU-ṢA-BU* is used as an Akkadogram in a Hittite letter from Maṣat Höyük indicates that this was a Hittite metaphor that had found a welcome representation in writing.[37]

Conluding Remarks

Translating metaphoric speech from one language to another is not straightforward as not all metaphors translate from one culture to another when there are different conceptual frameworks at play. The above examples illustrate some different strategies Hittite scribes might opt for when making use of imagery and metaphoric speech in texts written in the foreign language Akkadian. This could involve filling an existent expression with more nuanced meaning, opting for a similar but slightly different expression or crafting an entirely new creative metaphor.

With regard to the diplomatic texts composed in Akkadian language by Hittite scribes, the target language in most cases is not only a foreign language to the composing party but it does not correspond to the native language of the corresponding party either, so that complex conceptual metaphors of the target language might have been lost not only on the authors but also on the recipients. Theoretically, this may have caused the authors to steer away from such expressions, even when they were aware of them, if they were perceived as not meaningful for their audience.

The difficulty in identifying, interpreting and contextualising metaphoric speech in texts written millennia ago, lies in the fact that in some instances even the primary meaning of a word eludes us and there is often a lack of parallels that might help in establishing why a certain word was chosen to represent a particular idea. Thus, when faced with single attestations it is possible that either we do not recognise a metaphor for what it is, because we are not aware that the word had a different "literal" meaning, or when it occurs in fragmentary context we may not be able to make sense of the passage at all. It is then even more difficult to establish whether a metaphor is standard or creative and, when faced with texts that are not written in the scribe's native language, we have to consider whether an idiomatic expression reflects a turn of phrase that he has learned during his education in the foreign language, whether it is inherent in his own language background or whether there may be influence from yet another language that functions as an intermediary between the two, for instance in the transmission of literary knowledge or scribal fare or in the context of correspondence or the exchange of experts.

37 [*n*]*u-uš-ši ḪA-A-MU* [*Ù*] / *ḪU-U-ṢA-BU le-e* / [*ḫ*]*ar-ak-zi* "No chaff or splinter of his shall perish" (Alp 1991, 294, 92: 3–5). I am indebted to my colleague Tomoki Kitazumi for bringing this letter to my attention.

Bibliography

Alp, S. 1991, *Hethitische Briefe aus Maşat Höyük. Türk Tarih Kurumu yayıları VI. dizi, 35*, Ankara: Turk Tarih Kurumu Basimevi.

Braarvig, J. 2008, "Dependent Languages", in: J. Braarvig – M.J. Geller (eds), *Studies in Multilingualism, Lingua Franca and Lingua Sacra*, Max Planck Research Library for the History and Development of Knowledge - Studies 10, Berlin: Edition Open Access, 79–90.

Cavigneaux, A. – Güterbock, H.G. – Roth, M.T. (with the assistance of G. Farber) 1985, *The Series Erim-ḫuš = anantu and An-ta-gál = šaqû*, Materialien zum sumerischen Lexikon 17, Roma: Pontificium Institutum Biblicum.

Kitchen, K.A. – Lawrence, P.J.N. 2012, *Treaty, Law and Covenant in the Ancient Near East,* Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz.

Knowles, M. – Moon, R. 2006, *Introducing Metaphor,* London/New York: Routledge.

Labat, R. 1932, *L'Akkadien de Boghaz-Köi. Etude sur la langue des lettres, traités et vocabulaires akkadiens trouvés à Boghaz-Köi*, Bordeaux: Delmas.

Lakoff, G. – Johnson, M. 1980, *Metaphors We Live By*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Lakoff, G. – Johnson, M. 1980, transl. Hildenbrand, A. 1997, *Leben in Metaphern. Konstruktion und Gebrauch von Sprachbildern*, Heidelberg: Carl-Auer-Systeme.

Lakoff, G. – Johnson, M. 1980, transl. Violi, P. 2007 *Metafora e vita quotidiana*, Milano: Bompiani.

Luckenbill, D.D. 1924, *The Annals of Sennacherib*, Oriental Institute Publications *2,* Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Miller, J.L. 2013, *Royal Hittite Instructions and Related Administrative Texts*, Writings from the Ancient World 31, Atlanta: SBL Press.

Monti, E. 2009, "Translating the Metaphors We Live By. Intercultural negotiations in conceptual metaphors", *European Journal of English Studies* 13/2, 207–221.

Rainey, A.F. 2015, *The El-Amarna Correspondence. A New Edition of the Cuneiform Letters from the Site of El-Amarna based on Collations of the Extant Tablets. Vol. 1: Edited by William M. Schniewind. Vol. 2: Edited and Completed by Zipora Cochavi-Rainey*, Handbuch der Orientalistik 110/1–2, Leiden/Boston: Brill.

Samanego Fernández, E. – Velasco Sacristán, M. – Fuertes Olivera, P.A. 2005, "Translations we live by: the impact of metaphor translation on target systems", in: P.A. Fuertes Olivera (ed), *Lengua y Sociedad: Investigaciones recientes en Lingüística Aplicada,* Valladolid: Universitad de Valladolid, 61–81.

Scheucher, T. 2012, *The Transmissional and Functional Context of the Lexical Lists from Ḫattuša and from the Contemporaneous Traditions in Late-Bronze-Age Syria*, PhD Thesis, Leiden University.

Thompson, R.C. 1923, *Assyrian Medical Texts from the Originals in the British Museum*, London: Milford.

Veldhuis, N. 2014, *History of the Cuneiform Lexical Tradition*, Guides to the Mesopotamian Textual Record 6, Münster: Ugarit Verlag.

Weeden, M. 2011, *Hittite Logograms and Hittite Scholarship*, Studien zu den Boğazköy-Texten 54, Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz.

Abbreviations

AHw	W. Von Soden, *Akkadisches Handwörterbuch: unter Benutzung des lexikalischen Nachlasses von Bruno Meissner (1868–1947)*, Wiesbaden, 1965–1981
Angim	The Return of Ninurta to Nippur (ETCSL c.1.6.1)
BAM	Die Babylonisch-Assyrische Medizin in Texten und Untersuchungen, Berlin.
CAD	The Assyrian Dictionary of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago, Chicago
CDLI	Cuneiform Digital Library Initiative, http://cdli.ucla.edu
CEB	Common English Bible
CHD	The Hittite Dictionary of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago, Chicago.
CLAM	The Canonical Lamentations of Ancient Mesopotamia (M.E. Cohen, *The Canonical Lamentations of Ancient Mesopotamia (Vol. I and II)*, Potomac, 1988)
CTH	E. Laroche, *Catalogue des textes hittites*, Paris, 1971.
DI A	Dumuzi-Inanna Song A (ETCSL c.4.08.01)
ETCSL	J.A. Black – G. Cunningham – J. Ebeling – E. Flückiger-Hawker – E. Robson, – J. Taylor – G. Zólyomi, The Electronic Text Corpus of Sumerian Literature (http://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk/), Oxford 1998–2006
HED	J. Puhvel, *Hittite Etymological Dictionary*, Berlin/New York/Amsterdam, 1984–2017
HW^2	J. Friedrich – A. Kammenhuber *et al.*, *Hethitisches Wörterbuch. Zweite, völlig neubearbeitete Auflage auf der Grundlage der edierten hethitischen Texte*, Heidelberg, 1957–ongoing
Inana B	The Exaltation of Inanna (ETCSL c. 4.07.2)
JPS	The Jewish Publication Society
KBo	Keilschrifttexte aus Boghazköi
KTU	Keilalphabetische Texts aus Ugarit
KUB	Keilschriturkunden aus Boghazköi
LSUr	The lament for Sumer and Urim (ETCSL c.2.2.3)
LUr	Lamentation over the Destruction of Ur (ETCSL c.2.2.2)
MT	Mesoretic Text
Nanna L	A šir-namgala to Nanna (ETCSL c.4.13.12)
NIV	New International Version (of the Bible)
RIMA	The Royal Inscriptions of Mesopotamia, Assyrian Periods
RINAP	The Royal Inscriptions of the Neo-Assyrian Period
RS	Ras Shamra – Ugarit (tablet inventory reference)
SAA	State Archives of Assyria
UHF	Forerunners Udug-Hul (Geller 1985)
UrN A	Death of Ur-Namma (Ur-Namma A) (ETCSL c. 2.4.1.1)