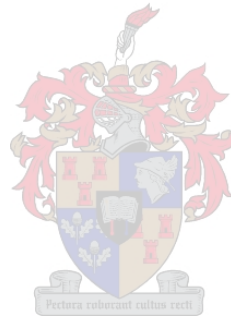# Royal Ideology in Mesopotamian Iconography of the Third and Second Millennia BCE with Special Reference to Gestures

by
Jonathan Michael Westhead

Thesis presented in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences at Stellenbosch University

Supervisor: Prof. Izak Cornelius

March 2015

Declaration

By submitting this thesis electronically, I declare that the entirety of the work contained therein is my own, original work, that I am the sole author thereof (save to the extent explicitly otherwise stated), that reproduction and publication thereof by Stellenbosch University will not infringe any third party rights and that I have not previously in its entirety or in part submitted it for obtaining any qualification.

March 2015

ABSTRACT

This thesis aims to examine to what extent the visual representations of ancient Mesopotamia portrayed the royal ideology that was present during the time of their intended display. The iconographic method is used in this study and this allows for a better understanding of the meaning behind the work of art. This method allows the study to better attempt to comprehend the underlying ideology of the work of art. The eight images studied date between three thousand BCE and one thousand BCE and this provides a broad base for the study. By having such a broad base it enables the study to provide a brief understanding of how the ideology adapted over two thousand years. The broad base also enables the study to examine a variety of different gestures that are portrayed on the representations. This thereby provides the reader with a better understanding of why certain gestures were used and how the underlying ideology was communicated through these movements. The study concludes that while the gestures lend a life-like appearance to the representation they do not solely portray an underlying ideological message. Rather, they enhance the already inherent ideological message.

OPSOMMING

Hierdie tesis ondersoek tot watter mate die visuele voorstellings van Ou Mesopotamië die koninklike ideologie — van die tyd toe hulle uitgestal is — uitgebeeld het. Die ikonografiese metode is in hierdie studie gebruik en maak dit moontlik om 'n beter begrip van die betekenis agter die kunswerk te verkry. Die metode stel die studie in staat om die onderliggende ideologie van die kunswerk beter te verstaan. Die agt bestudeerde beelde dateer tussen drieduisend v.C. en 'n duisend v.C. en bied 'n breë basis vir die studie. So 'n breë basis stel die studie in staat om te verstaan hoe die ideologie oor meer as twee duisend jaar aangepas is. Die breë basis stel die studie ook in staat om 'n verskeidenheid verskillende gebare wat uitgebeeld word, te ondersoek. Hierdeur verskaf dit die leser met 'n beter begrip waarom sekere gebare gebruik is en hoe die onderliggende ideologie deur middel van hierdie bewegings gekommunikeer is. Die studie kom tot die gevolgtrekking dat terwyl die gebare 'n lewensgetroue voorkoms aan die voorstelling gee, hulle nie uitsluitlik onderliggende ideologiese boodskappe uitbeeld nie. Inteendeel, hulle versterk die reeds onderliggende ideologiese boodskap.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to thank Professor Izak Cornelius for his constant encouragement throughout the course of this project. His knowledge and support has enabled me to complete a thesis of which I am proud.

To my parents, thank you for supporting my dream of studying and researching what I love.

I express my utmost gratitude to Renate van Dijk for the support and suggestions made during the writing of this thesis.

Lastly to Emma, I am greatly indebted for the constant questioning concerning the progress of this thesis – I would not have completed it without you.

CONTENTS

TABLE OF FIGURES

CHAPTER ONE

1.   INTRODUCTION

1.1.   RESEARCH PROBLEM, DESIGN AND QUESTIONS

In the past the academic world has previously focused its attentions on verbal and written communicative studies and has tended to avoid studying a significantly important third aspect of communication – nonverbal communicative methods or as they are often referred to in this study, gestures. Farnell (1996:536) notes that this may have been caused by a Western approach to academic studies in which the body was considered the "material locus for physical expression of irrationality, feeling and emotion" while the mind was considered the locus of rationality.

Kruger goes on to note that while this may have been the case in the previous century, thankfully "nonverbal communication has been promoted to the "lecture's podium"" and this has allowed for "significant advances in the social-scientific study of this phenomenon" (1998:142). While studies of nonverbal communication in the past have tended to focus on written documents, iconographic studies on the topic have not lagged behind; e.g. Keel in his ground-breaking study of the conceptual and symbolic world of ancient Near East studies iconographic materials (1972/1997).

Mesopotamian studies in iconography examine the artwork of ancient Mesopotamia and attempt to discern the symbolism and the ideas that lie behind the initial glance. The exact definition of iconography will be examined later in this chapter; however, one should first

examine the term "art" and what exactly is meant by it. Winter once described Mesopotamian art as "any work that is imaginatively conceptualized and that affords visual and emotional satisfaction, for which manufacturing skill is required and to which some established standards have been applied" (1995:2570).

 Arnold Hauser, discussing Mesopotamian art, states that "[d]ie altorientalische Kunst beschränkte sich, ausser der Hausindustrie, die im grossen und ganzen noch in der neolithischen Art betrieben wurde, auf die Herstellung von Weihgaben an die Götter und Denkmäler für die Könige, Requisiten des Götter- und Herrscherkults, Monumenten, die dem Ruhm der Unsterblichen oder den Nachruhm ihrer irdischen Vertreter gewidmet waren, ohne vom Prestige der Gerühmten etwas die Ruhmspender fallen zu lassen" (1973:165). Hauser's description of art is greatly disappointing in terms of his first sentence, which stated that ancient art was limited. He does, however, go on to add that the artworks were produced as votive offerings for the gods and kings in order to praise them and ensure that their deeds were remembered for future generations.

Hauser, by stating that they were produced to ensure that deeds were remembered, touches on a vital aspect in attempting to understand Mesopotamian artwork, i.e. ideology. The prevalence of these ideological forms appearing in iconographic materials is simple to deduce: the ruling strata of society needed to ensure that the citizens of the state accepted their rule. Royal ideology needed to ensure that kingship was understood as being a fundamental institution of society. Therefore, when discussing royal ideology in iconographic materials one must understand that the king is always the protagonist in these pieces (Suter 2013:547).

As one studies the protagonist, a large amount of emphasis should be placed on their actions within the iconographic representation and how they convey messages through their gestures and movements.[1]

Gesture, in modern society, is often studied in an attempt to understand the underlying thought processes behind communication, Charles Darwin is quoted as saying, concerning gesture language that "[c]ertain states of the mind lead… to certain habitual movement" (Darwin 1965:50 quoted in Gruber 1980:1). This can be attested to during 'real life' through an examination of hand gesture accompanying speech and the semiotic relationship that exists between both factors. While differing semiotic indicators can be used to portray the same information, e.g. the spoken term '*down*', the hand gesture of *DOWN* and an arrow ↓ pointing down, the use of one indicator over another can imply a different manner thought process or reasoning (Enfield 2005:52). It is possible then to state that the ancient Mesopotamian use of varying gesture and bodily movements within iconographic materials could indicate a completely dissimilar thought process to a modern one, and that some of the gestures used were not simple forms of greeting (i.e. raised hands with palms facing outwards) but rather a form of ideological representation[2]. With this in mind, this study aims to provide evidence for the royal ideological nature of gesture language within select Mesopotamian third and second millennia iconographic materials.

---

[1] Zwickel, in his article on the iconography of emotions, argues that "emotions are sometimes expressed by gestures, attitudes, and movements [but that these] gestures are normally completely different that we use today to express emotions" (2012:2).
[2] Othmar Keel, an eminent scholar on iconographic studies in the ancient Near East has published two works on the iconographic study of gestures, Keel 1974 and Keel 1982.

An initial examination of the concepts of ideology and gesture leads to a large amount of theory that must be studied before one can fully understand the nature of these ideas. A brief glance at various definitions can attest to this. The *Oxford English Dictionary* defines ideology as "a systematic scheme of ideas, usually relating to politics, economics, or society and forming the basis of action or policy." Naturally this relates to a modern conception of ideology, however, the further one delves into the nature of ideology in ancient Mesopotamia the more pertinent it becomes to this study.

The second chapter of this study is dedicated to an examination of the theoretical aspects of ideology – providing an initial discussion of the term, formulating a usable definition for the study, and examining the historical basis of ideology as it is presented in various Mesopotamian historical eras.

The third chapter continues this form of study by initially discussing gesture theory and attempting to formulate a usable definition for the study. The chapter then discusses gesture usage in Mesopotamian historical eras by examining the four types of movements that are studied and their specific historical bases. The fourth and fifth chapters of the study go on to examine eight specific iconographic works, in total, and how they communicate ideology. The representations are not only examined in terms of the gesture that is prevalent, but rather in their entirety to examine how these movements add to the ideological message that is portrayed.

Finally the study aims to answer three fundamental questions:

1) Do the selected representations portray an underlying ideology?

2) If so, what is the ideological message they portray?

3) Does the gesture portrayed, be it micro or macro[3], contribute to the transmission of the ideological message?

By combining these questions, one can determine that the study ultimately aims to provide an answer for the following question: Does an examination of the underlying ideology in Mesopotamian iconographic representations bring about a better understanding of the ideological function of gesture in those representations?

The three questions are then answered in the summary and the final conclusions are drawn. Before, however, one is able to discuss the ideological and gesture language theory, it is appropriate to provide an analysis of the iconographic method, which is the chosen methodological mode of analysis for this study.

1.2. *METHODOLOGICAL OUTLINE*

The availability of sources determines the nature of the study and recently there has been a growth in the study of ideology as portrayed in ancient Mesopotamian images. As such the method followed in this study is the iconographic one; including the descriptive, analytical, and interpretive phases (Panofsky 1983). Cornelius (1994:18) emphasises the importance of iconographic studies when he states that there are "many mental ideas, images and concepts

---

[3] The terms micro and macro are discussed below in chapter 3.2.1 and 3.2.2 respectively.

[that] do not always or only lend themselves to verbal description and can sometimes only be understood when studied in a visualized form." Lewis (2005:76) later stresses that iconography must accompany texts and not replace them – as an examination of artwork alone would surely be lacking. One must study them within their archaeological and historical context to be able to understand the symbolism and message of the imagery.

Weissenrieder and Wendt (2005:6) summarise Panofsky's various methodological discussions into a table that provides a visual outline of the iconographic method. It is worth representing this here, rather than providing a lengthy textual discussion regarding this:

Object of Interpretation	Act of Interpretation	Interpretive Tools	Corrective Principle of Interpretation (History of Transition)
Primary or natural Subject – (A) factual, (B) expressional-, which forms the world of artistic motifs	Pre-iconographic description (and pseudo-formal analysis)	Practical experience (Familiarity with objects and events)	Style-History (Insight into the manner in which, in changing historical conditions, objects and events are expressed through forms)
Secondary or conventional subject, which forms the world from images, anecdotes and allegories	Iconographic analysis	Knowledge of literary sources (Familiarity with certain themes and concepts)	Type-History (Insight into the manner in which, in changing historical conditions, particular themes or concepts are expressed through objects and events)
Actual meaning or content, which forms the world of »symbolic« values	Iconological interpretation	Synthetic intuition (Familiarity with the essential tendencies of the human spirit), formed through personal psychology and one's view of the world	History of cultural symptoms or »Symbols« generally (Insight into the manner in which, in changing historical conditions, essential tendencies or the human spirit are expressed through particular themes and concepts)

Keel (1997:7) emphasises that ancient Near Eastern imagery was not intended to be viewed, as a nineteenth-century artwork would be (*Sehbild*), instead this imagery should be read (*Denkbild*). By explaining this he encourages the reader to look past the outward appearance and rather delve deeper into the symbolic meaning that was evident in the majority of ancient Near Eastern imagery.

The representations studied in chapters four and five follow Cornelius' identification process (1994:24):

1. *Number, location, and provenance*: The items are numbered according to a system which represents the gesture used and the number of the item (thus CH1 represents Clasped Hands and the number 1). After the study number follows the current location of the item and the information pertaining to that – i.e. the museum, museum item number, and excavation number, if those are available. Following this is the provenance of the item if it is known.

2. *Technical description of the item*: The type, quality, characteristics, date and size.

3. *Image*: An image of the object

4. *Description*: The iconographic description and analysis. The descriptions are orientated towards the figure and not the reader – i.e. the right hand indicates the right hand of the figure, which from the reader's point of view may be the left hand.

5. *Identification*: The figures within the item are identified and the gesture type(s) presented in the representation is (are) identified.

6. *Inscription*: A translation of inscriptions – where applicable – is given.

7. *Ideological Description*: The royal ideology of the object is described and then linked to the gesture that is present.

Section four, five and seven listed above correspond to Panofsky's three acts of interpretation, namely pre-iconographic interpretation, iconographic analysis and finally iconological interpretation.

Using the iconographic method provides this study with a unique perspective into the symbolic nature of these representations and provides one with a strong basis for the understanding of the ideological messages that are portrayed by the depictions.

CHAPTER TWO

2.   IDEOLOGY – INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

Understanding how ideological motifs are communicated, in terms of the messages that are contained in ancient Mesopotamian works of art, is a difficult task to undertake without understanding what constitutes the term "ideology". This chapter aims to elucidate this by formulating an understandable and workable definition for ideology and examining how it communicates its messages in a variety of ancient Mesopotamian sources, not limiting this initial discussion to iconographic materials.

The iconographic materials presented for study in the chapters that follow cannot be considered art, in the modern sense of the term. In fact, they were not considered to be works of art for the ancient Mesopotamians for whom they were made, they were rather considered to be works of skill. [4] These materials were one of the techniques in which ideas and information concerning the larger society or cultural system as a whole was conveyed (Ross 2005:327). All persons involved in the process of creation, be it author, patron or receiver, contributed in some manner to the strengthening of the ideological systems that were in effect at the time.

Ideology was not solely limited to iconographic materials, it was expressed in all manner of methods – visually (iconographic materials, architecture, source materials), orally (stories, texts, folktales), textually (epics, royal inscriptions), and ritually (religious ceremonies, political ceremonies, etc.) (Ross 2005:328). This is echoed by Postgate (1995:395-6) who

---

[4] Cf. Mortensen (1997) for a full discussion of how the term "art" came to be.

states that the majority of sources that are available to scholars are official and thus are rife with ideological symbolism and messages, some being more obvious than others, however, all coming from official propaganda. Liverani echoes this concept in his paper expounding Assyrian imperialistic ideology by stating that it "is obvious on the one hand that the written message was complemented by other types of messages, in particular the visual one (one thinks of the propaganda function fulfilled by wall reliefs) and the oral one" (1979:302).

These messages were intended for a specific audience, one which would understand the underlying intention of the ideological source, one which could 'read between the lines' (Cifarelli 1998:210). The audience/receivers would have been able to, perhaps sub-consciously, understand the message that was being conveyed – although it is unlikely that they would have perceived it as ideology in any manner (Wolff 1993:115). Liverani identifies the same phenomenon of unawareness concerning Assyrian imperial ideology: expressing that the beneficiaries/authors (the ruling class), the agents and receivers (the Assyrian populace fulfils a dual role), and the victims (the external populace being conquered) all take part in the ideological mechanisms through various acts. However, since ideology is a socio-cultural phenomenon and not an individual one it goes largely unperceived by all involved (Liverani 1979:299).

The term ideology has been used often in this study, however, it is obvious to any student of ideology that there were, and still are, more than one specific type. Ross notes that cultures "may maintain multiple, nested, or conflicting ideologies, though one will usually dominate others" (Ross 2005:328). Liverani (1979:299-301) mentions seven types of ideology in his

article "The ideology of the Assyrian empire" and hints at several more: 1) ideology of the ruling class – this form of ideology is most likely to be the dominant ideology in any culture. 2) ideology of the lower class – Liverani specifically uses the term 'ideologies' of the lower classes and marginal groups, thereby hinting at the fact that there were more than one type of ideology prevalent in this strata of society. 3) Ideology of terror – this type is mentioned very briefly, however, it seems to suggest a type of ideology based on terror that is able to ruthlessly and quickly absorb other types of ideology and replace them. 4) Ideology of victory and domination – this type of ideology provides justification for the Assyrian imperialistic defeat of its enemies, thus not only influencing the conquered peoples but the Assyrian population too. 5) Ideology of defeat and subjugation – this ideology provides justification for defeat and subjugation, thereby influencing the defeated peoples of Assyria's conquests. 6) Ideology of imperialism – this could be construed as the ideology of the neo-Assyrian empire as a whole; it is possible that this form of ideology incorporated many aspects of the others listed above. 7) Ideology of religion – this type of ideology is fairly self-explanatory, expounding upon the tenets of religious ideals and forms in the Assyrian period as well as providing explanations for unknown phenomena.

The various ideologies (1-7) listed above are some of the few that one encounters when studying ideology in ancient Mesopotamia. To be able to understand ideology to the extent that one can apply it to a study it must be recognized that there is more than one type and that many of these types/forms of ideology will overlap with one another. More important than both of these, however, is to try and define ideology suitably and succinctly.

2.1. DEFINING IDEOLOGY

Ideology is a complex term and cannot be understood through the use of a one line definition. It encompasses a variety of characteristics, some which are important to this study and other which are not. The philosopher Louis Althusser provides a remarkable study of ideology in his essay entitled "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses" (1971:127-186). In this essay, Althusser posits a brief definition of ideology as "a system of ideas and representations which dominate the mind of a man or a social group" (Althusser 1971:158). These ideas and representations can take a variety of forms, e.g. myth, visual representation, oral forms, and textual. However, they all maintain the singular aim of representing a, usually false, image of societal norms and behavioural models. Althusser expands upon his theory of ideology by clarifying to the reader a number of hypotheses that he makes:

1. "Ideology represents the imaginary relationship of individuals to their real conditions of existence" (Althusser 1971:162) – Althusser expounds on this by explaining that, unlike Marx's theses regarding this[5], ideology does not hide away a 'real' world but rather represents the fictional relationship that exists between the individuals and this 'real' world. Althusser bases his understanding on the theories developed by Lacan, most notably his idea of the imaginary order being removed from the so-called Lacanian 'Real' order[6].

---

[5] Marx posits that ideology hides a real world from individuals and by proving ideologies false one is able to move away from the imagined one and into the real one. (Marx & Engels 2001:47)

[6] Lacanian philosophy understands these terms as follows:

The Imaginary Order – The fantasy world in which the human subject creates the idealized version of him/herself and all the objects of his/her desire (Hurst 2012:282)

With this in mind, it is clear that Althusser hypothesised that we cannot escape ideology because we perceive it through language and thus it is always with us.

2. "Ideology has a material existence" (Althusser 1971:165) – Althusser clarifies that ideology is manifested through human actions/practices and thus must be material as individuals are material beings (1971:168-9).

3. "Ideology interpellates individuals as subjects" (Althusser 1971:173) – Althusser understands ideology as something that is so pervasive that it turns humans into subjects; these subjects are all ideological. Thus, being human makes one a participant in the ideological practices. The practice of interpellation occurs before one is even born and thus humans are always subjects. Althusser uses the example of a child's name: "it is certain in advance that it will bear its Father's Name, and will therefore have identity and be irreplaceable. Before its birth, the child is therefore always-already a subject, appointed as a subject in and by the specific familial ideological configuration in which it is 'expected' once it has been conceived" (Althusser 1971:176)

These hypotheses indicate an important characteristic of ideology: ideology requires human participation to thrive, in fact without the human condition ideology would not exist. Ideology is a man-made construct that requires material interaction and makes use of interpellation to

---

The Real Order :The 'real' state of the world which the human subject cannot obtain due to his/her fundamental manner of perceiving the world. In other words, humans perceive their world through language and this hinders them from ever entering the 'real' world (Hurst 2012:280-281).

ensure humans are subject to its messages and motifs. Along with the characteristics mentioned above, Althusser discusses another which is necessary to consider. Althusser claims that "ideology has no history" (Althusser 1971:159). By this he does not mean that there is no history in ideology, but rather that ideology "has no history of its own" (1971:160). He argues that it is "endowed with a structure and a functioning such as to make it a non-historical reality, i.e. an *omni-historical* reality, in the sense in which that structure and functioning are immutable, present in the same form throughout what we can call history" (Althusser 1971:161). This argument allows for his various characteristics mentioned above to be applicable to all specific ideologies that were in operation at all times in human history. As part of our definition of ideology then, one must state that ideology represents an imaginary relationship between individuals and the real conditions of existence, that it relies on material actions, and that it uses the process of interpellation to ensure that humans are subjected to its varying messages.

DeMarrais, Castillo & Earle provide a useful discussion of ideology, especially with regard to the materialization thereof, stating "that ideology is materialized, or given concrete form, in order to be a part of the human culture that is broadly shared by members of a society. This process of materialization makes it possible to control, manipulate, and extend ideology beyond the local group" (1996:15). They further attempt to illustrate that it is only through the process of materialization that ideology is able to extend control beyond the local population and spread its influence further afield. Materialized ideology, e.g. textual sources, monuments, symbolic objects, and rituals, furthers the objective of achieving a unified social power or system between the peoples of an empire (DeMarrais *et al.* 1996:16). The

materialization process transforms concepts into physical objects, encapsulating a variety of ideas into a reality that societal elements can share through physical interaction (DeMarrais *et al.* 1996:16). These materialized ideological objects then facilitate ideological action; the dissemination of the concepts and ideas of the dominant social group to other societal factions in order to bring about the continued or renewed exploitation of lower class factions in a manner that will be considered 'right' and thus not bring the inequality of the social system to light (Liverani 1979:298).

The inequality of a social structure is a central component of any ideological system – royal ideology, for example, relies upon the continued exploitation of the lower classes to ensure the dominant group maintains the political power. Brumfiel (1996:49) makes note of the fact that ideologies do not solely operate based on a class inequality system – they are also able to operate in systems which present gender, race, ethnicity, and age inequality. Ideology achieves its aim not through the process of domination, but rather through the process of consent – legitimizing a set of beliefs by "masking, naturalizing, or flaunting a particular view of the world" (Pollock 1999:173). In other words, ideology can achieve its aim through a two-fold method; either by masking a view of the world that its components do not wish to be 'revealed' or by flaunting a particular view of the world that its components wish to have 'exposed'. It is possible that it does both at the same time, thus minimising one worldview and promoting another. This aspect of defining ideology could be called worldview promotion and negation. Ideology in fact, often overlaps with the worldview of ancient Mesopotamia in an attempt to use already existing structures to ensure that the message penetrates society.

An adequate definition of ideology still eludes us, although many authors simply use the Marxist interpretation of ideology. Althusser (1971:158) defines ideology as "the system of the ideas and representations which dominate the mind of a man or a social group." Liverani (1979:298) defines it as a phenomenon which "makes one act against one's own actual interests, for the sake of fictitious interest, even interests the benefit of which will be reaped after death [...] it is ultimately a "false consciousness": not the mirror of physical and economic reality, but its inverted image." Ideology is defined by Pollock (1999:173) "in a marxist sense to refer to the portrayal of the particular interests and values of certain social groups as if they were those of everyone in a society." Ross follows perhaps the most Marxist interpretation by stating that ideology is defined "as a collection of strategies and shared meanings deployed by an elite class to make present realities, including social and economic stratification and political inequalities, appear natural and beneficial to society as a whole" (Ross 2005:328).

Eagleton does not continue along this vein of thought in his discussion of ideology, rather he states that there has been no adequate definition of ideology due to the fact that ideology is a multifaceted concept that has a large range of meanings, some applicable to certain situations but not to others (Eagleton 1991:1-2). He substantiates his claim that it is multifaceted by providing the reader with sixteen definitions of ideology, which he states are all in use today. This includes:

1. a body of ideas characteristic of a particular social group or class;

2. ideas which help to legitimate a dominant political power;

3. false ideas which help to legitimate a dominant political power;

4. systematically distorted communication;

5. socially necessary illusion;

6. the indispensable medium in which individuals live out their relations to a social structure;

Many of the definitions above contain a similar element that is critical to any discussion regarding ideology – ideology aims to ensure cooperation between social groups and the dominant social order. One element of note is that there can, in some cases, be a clear distinction between the subtlety and blatancy of how the various ideologies go about achieving their aim. It is easy to note the subtle manner in which example five would go about spreading an ideological message – it provides a social illusion that assists in the creation of a false ideological world. One is not able to say, in general terms, how this illusion would be created. However, the actual terminology used to describe example five seems less blatant than example four. Example four is a far more blatant ideological characteristic – the distortion of communication in a systematic manner requires a far more active participation in the ideological process.

It is important to note, before this study's definition of ideology is given, that the definition does not focus on the theoretical aspects of ideology but rather on the workable aspects. In other words, the definition below is focused on defining ideology in terms of the manner in

which it achieved its required aims rather than attempting to provide a theoretical definition of ideology.

Therefore with all the characteristics mentioned, it is now possible to form an idea concerning how ideology should be defined to understand the phenomenon discussed in this study. Ideology is thus described in this study as the process through which a particular social group's system of concepts and ideas influence the culture of another. It sustains an imaginary relationship between individuals and their real conditions of existence through the process of materialization and interpellation. Materialization extends ideological control and facilitates the ideological aim of idea dissemination, which in turn facilitates further inequality (be it class, race, ethnicity, gender, or age inequality). The ideological processes most often work through consent rather than domination and it is possible for certain processes to be more blatant than others or more subtle than others.

It is now possible, with a degree of understanding of ideology, to discuss the other factors that are largely important to understanding materialized ideological products and how their message was spread.

2.2. *CHARACTERISTICS OF MESOPOTAMIAN ROYAL IDEOLOGY*

Ideology was, during the Mesopotamian empires, by no means a stagnant phenomenon. In order to understand royal ideology there are a multitude of factors that one should take into account: the types of rulership, the various types of peoples that were living in Mesopotamia

(e.g. different ethnicities) and the various separate social circumstances that these groups brought (Johandi 2012:13).

Royal ideology in Mesopotamia can be classified by the various periods into which the Mesopotamian region was classified, namely: The Pre-historic/Early and Late Uruk period, the Early Dynastic period, the Akkadian and Gutian periods, the Ur III and Isin-Larsa periods, the Old-Babylonian and Old Assyrian periods, the Middle Babylonian and Middle Assyrian periods, and the Neo-Assyrian and Neo-Babylonian periods. For the sake of expediency this thesis only discusses artefacts in the second through fourth periods. To understand royal ideology in those periods, though, one must have an understanding of the Early and Late Uruk period and how royal ideology was characterised therein.

2.2.1. *The Pre-historic/Early and Late Uruk period (ca. 4000-2900 BCE)*

Scholars divide the fourth millennium into three distinct phases, based on excavation levels; the Early Uruk period (excavation levels XIV-V or ca. 4000 – 3400[7]), the Late Uruk period (excavation levels IV-III or ca. 3400 – 2900) and the Jemdet Nasr period (ca. 3100-2900) (Johandi 2012:13). The Uruk periods are named after the predominant city-state of the era, Uruk[8], while the Jemdet Nasr period is named after the city Jemdet Nasr. This city-state is of incredible importance to early Mesopotamian studies, as it is here, during the Late Uruk period, that one finds an early example of true urban revolution. Indeed, it is through this process of urbanisation that early evidence of Mesopotamian royal ideology comes to light.

---

[7] All dates in this thesis are considered to be BCE, unless otherwise stated. For Mesopotamian history, the middle chronology is followed.

[8] Biblical city Erech and modern day Warka. Cf. Crüsemann *et al.* 2013. The *Vorderasiatisches Museum* in *Berlin* held a major exhibition of the artefacts of Uruk in 2013.

Early evidence suggests a leader of Uruk society known as the "priest-king" (cf. figure 1 and 2). This individual obtained his power and rank from the temple indicating that the temple was the dominant power structure in the early cities (van de Mieroop 2011:27). Scholars are still unclear as to whether the figure considered to be the priest-king was an actual ruler of the city, being designated by the title *en*, or whether he had no such title and was merely considered to be the head of the temple complex. Steinkeller argues that based upon the historical evidence, it can be assured that the priest-king bore the title of *en* and that further evidence suggests that all rulers of city-states during this era bore this title, therefore signifying that the institution of Sumerian kingship was designated by the *en* character (1999:111). Heimpel (1992) discusses a similar concept, however, he states that *en* is a term for rulership while the term *lugal* is the term for kingship. Selz builds upon Heimpel's distinctions by differentiating between two concepts of early rulership, the 'bürokratisch-sakrales' and 'dynastisch-charistmatisches' (Selz 1998:283). Applying these principles Brisch (2006:162-3) comes to the conclusion that they "manifest themselves in the terms l u g a l (dynastic) and e n (non-dynastic), respectively, and can seemingly be found among the rulers of the Early Dynastic period who are usually, but not always, referred to as e n and in the kings of Akkad who called themselves l u g a l, Akkadian *šarrum* ." Michalowski discusses the same concept, however, he comes to a different conclusion regarding the geographical locations; stating that the terms *en*, *lugal*, and *énsi* are different words for sovereign, simply hailing from different locations, with *en* being used in Uruk, *lugal* in Ur, and *énsi* in Lagash (2008:33). It is clear then that scholars are unsure concerning the specifics of the terminology

21

used to designate rulers. However, they are sure that the terms in some way are used to indicate that the person in question was a ruler or sovereign.

It is unclear whether the male figure in figure 1 represents an actual being known as the priest king (figure 2) or whether it is possibly another being[9]. The only possible statement to make regarding the so-called priest-king figure is that he undoubtedly was in a position of authority in the Late Uruk period and was inextricably linked to the temple complexes – thus one is able to isolate strong religious motifs in the royal ideology of that period.

---
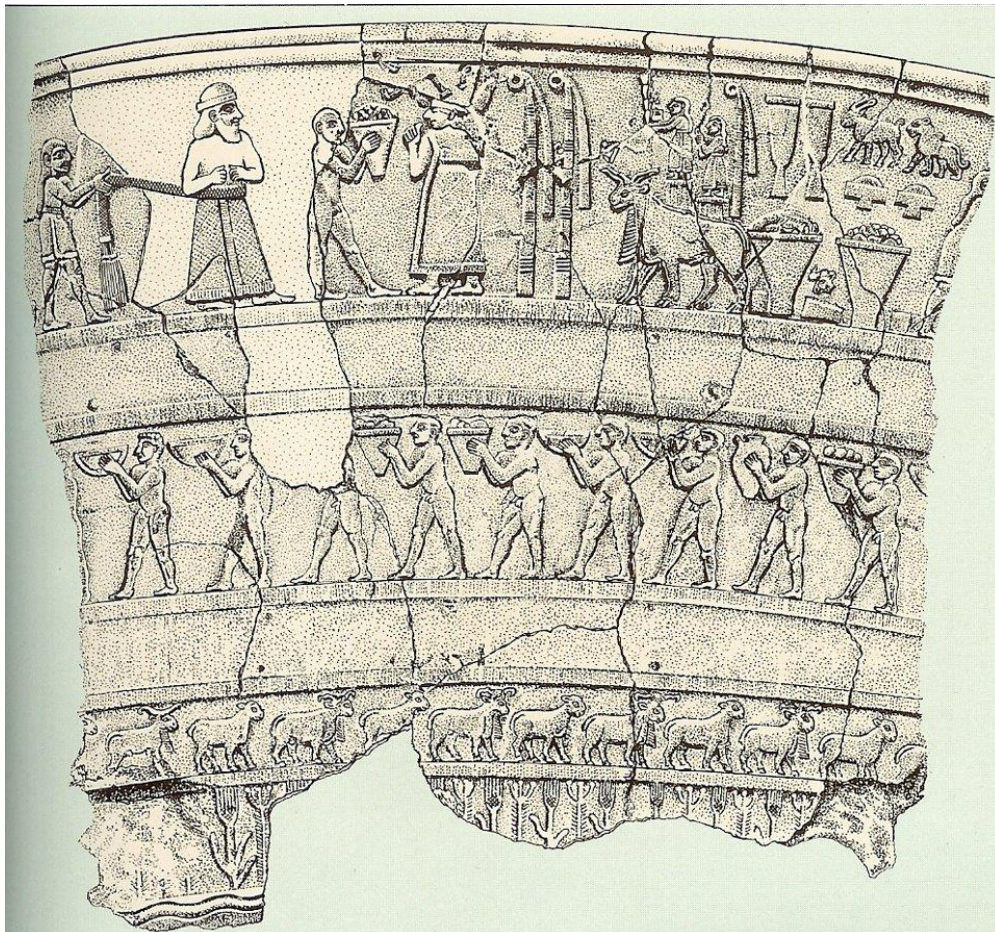
[9] Cf. Cabrera Pertusatti, R. & Van Dijk, R.M (forthcoming) for more information regarding the priest-king as other possible figures.

Figure 1: The Uruk vase, partial reconstruction (Roaf 2004:61).

The possible priest-king figure is present on the top register on the left, second from the left.

Figure 2: The so-called Priest-King (Crüsemann, van Ess, Hilgert, & Salje 2013:138)

2.2.2.   *The Early Dynastic period (ca. 2900 – 2334 BCE)*

Scholars have divided this period into four distinct subdivisions – Early Dynastic (ED) I (ca. 2900 – 2750), ED II (ca. 2750 – 2600), ED IIIa (ca. 2600 – 2450) and ED IIIb (ca. 2450 –

2334). These distinctions made are not based upon changes in a political climate but rather in stylistic changes that appear in the material remains from the period (van de Mieroop 2011:42).

It is during these periods that one sees the emergence of the first lengthy royal inscriptions which strongly propagate the royal ideology of the period:

> "For (the god) Enlil, king of all the lands, Enshakushana, lord of Sumer and king of the "Land" (i.e., Sumer) – (who), when the gods ordered him, destroyed Kish and seized Enbi'eshtar, the king of Kish – returned to(?) the leader of Akshak and the leader of Kish, whose cities were destroyed, their […] in their(?) […], (but) he dedicated their statues, their precious metals and lapis lazuli, their wood, and their treasure to Enlil, for Nippur" (Magid 2006:10).

These inscriptions are evidently materialized ideology, however, it is important to isolate the individual ideological motifs/elements within the inscription to determine what the ideology of the ED era was attempting to propagate. It is striking that the ideology is in immediate effect – the king (Enšakušana, ca. 2500) commits the deeds not for himself but for the god Enlil. He therefore has divine authority and these deeds are clearly blessed by the gods and not the ideas of mortal men. Enšakušana claims to be the "king of all the lands, […], lord of Sumer and king of the "Land"" – this ideologically laden statement appears throughout Mesopotamian history[10] so it seems to be nothing unique to this period. It is, however, important for one to identify ideological characteristics. The inscription overtly suggests the

---

[10] Cf. a praise poem of Iddin-Dagan (Iddin-Dagan B) (ca. 1975 – 1954): "After your sheperdship had pleased the heart, the people became numerous under you, the people spread wide under you. All the foreign lands lie down in pastures thanks to you" (Black, Cunningham, Flückiger-Hawker, Robson, & Zólyomi 1998:lines 53-9). For a later example see Leichty (2011:14) who translates an inscription of Esarhaddon as "I am Esarhaddon, king of the world, king of Assyria, valiant warrior, foremost of all rulers."

king's prowess in battle by listing the enemies whom he has destroyed. What is of incredible importance is the dedication of materials goods – the king dedicates this to Enlil, for the city of Nippur. Regardless of the fact that, in this period, the city-states were independent political entities, Nippur served a specific sacred function. Enlil, the head of the Mesopotamian pantheon, was said to reside in this city and thus many leaders of other Mesopotamian cities paid homage to this city in an attempt to enjoy preferential treatment from the divine sphere (Cole 1996:7).

It is in this period, ED I-IIIb, that the foundations for the ideological motifs of later Mesopotamian periods were set. There is a strong preference for battle victory, societal affluence, and most importantly religious motifs. Johandi (2012:17) confirms this by stating that "royal ideology in the Early Dynastic period was closely connected with gods" – each city had a preeminent deity who would select the sovereign to rule the earthly realm as their representative and ensure that their directives were being carried out. With regards to ideological purposes then, the ruler of the city was the dominant god and the king was only seen as acting out their commands.

2.2.3.   *The Akkadian period (ca. 2334 – 2112 BCE)*

The Akkadian period signifies a significant change in royal ideology, including the motifs and the manner in which this evidence was presented. It seems likely that the main reason for this change was the manner in which the political sphere of this period differed to those of before. The period is marked by a political rule that is far more centralised than before and this required a change in the approaches to ideological expansion.

A notable change in this period is the deification of Naram-Sin, the second king of the Akkadian Empire, which provides kings with an ideological apparatus hitherto unknown. There are various interpretations as to why Naram-Sin chose to deify himself, ranging from it being the most effective way to maintain control of his empire and the administration thereof (Roux 1992:156) to fulfilling the role of the Akkadian Empire's deity which was previously, when city-states were independent, a role fulfilled by individual deities specific to each city (Franke 1995:834). Brisch, an eminent scholar concerning royal deification in early Mesopotamia, explains that the only source of information concerning the act of deification itself is an inscription which states that the people of Akkad petitioned the gods to deify Naram-Sin and they acquiesced to the will of the people[11] (Brisch 2013:40). The process of deification continues into the Ur III period and is therein practiced more readily and to a larger degree. The clear evidence for Naram-Sin's deification comes from the victory stele (discussed in Chapter 5.2.2) and it is here that one is able to see his claim to divinity through his use of the horned helmet, a symbol of the gods (Figure 3). These crowns are prominent in almost all the iconographic evidence of Mesopotamian deities. However, even though Naram-Sin wears this helmet, Winter argues that he cannot be considered to be fully divine but rather should be considered a minor deity: "His [Naram-Sin] physical body reflects the perfection of one accorded divine status. However, emblems of deities were carried with him into battle; the neck bead he wears was probably a protective ornament invoking divine protection; and his headdress with its single tier of horns echoes, if anything, the status of a minor deity rather

---

[11] Michalowski (2008:34) translates the inscription as: "Because he [Naram-Sin] secured the foundations of his city (Agade) in times of trouble, his city requested of Ishtar in Eana, of Enlil in Nippur, of Dagan in Tuttul, of Ninhursanga in Kesh, of Ea in Eridu, of Sin in Ur, of Shamash in Sippar, and of Nergal in Kutha, that (Naram-Sin) be made a god, and then built his temple in the midst of (the city of) Agade."

than a fully established member of the high pantheon" (Winter 2008:76). The single tiered horned headdress, according to Winter, then indicates a lower ranked divinity. This idea is further reinforced by Oates (2003:41). However, van Dijk (2011:133-134) examines evidence from the Early Dynastic to Akkadian periods and comes the conclusion that due to multiple pieces of archaeological evidence indicating higher ranked divinities wearing single tiered horned headdresses. Consequently Oates and Winter's assertions can no longer apply to certain types of representations.

Figure 3: Baked clay head of a god from Telloh (Girsu) (Van Dijk, R.M. 2010. Photo taken at Louvre – April)

Other than the deification of Naram-Sin, the titles such as 'king of the four quarters of the world' and 'king of Kiš' become far more common in usage which show that power is becoming more centralised (Johandi 2012:20). Other evidence for this is the more common usage of the various kings' names throughout literature and the term *ensi* becoming used to designate a local governor.

27

In this period there is an increase in the amount of representations of sovereigns (a trend which continues and grows in the later periods) and these iconographic representations are used to promote strong ideological messages – the kings as builders, victorious warriors and just rulers.

2.2.4.   *The Ur III and Isin-Larsa periods (ca. 2112 – 1800 BCE)*

The Ur III period (ca. 2112 – 2004) is named so due to the ruling dynasty of that time, the Third Dynasty of Ur, which created a new centralised empire (much like the Akkadian Empire) after the Gutian[12] rule was ended (van de Mieroop 2011:73-5). The kings of this period intensified the phenomenon of deification, so much so that one could argue that it became a tradition in this short time. Michalowski argues much to this effect by coming to the conclusion that it is only due to a specific set of circumstances, rather than a long historical tradition, that deification became so prevalent in the Ur III period. He continues by stating that "perhaps by framing royal self-divinization with the complex shifting roles of ritual, politics, and symbolic representations in specific historical circumstances, we may arrive at a better understanding of the complex dynamics of power in ancient polities" (Michalowski 2008:42). It is possible then to understand that this prevalence of self-deification in the Ur III period was a distinct ideological technique that commonly occurred and then for reasons unknown seemed to become less frequently used.

---

[12] The Gutians were a group of raiders from the Zagros Mountains who destroyed the capital city of the Akkadian empire and brought about its end at approximately 2200 BCE. After they destroyed the Akkadian empire the King list records twenty to twenty-one Gutian rulers for Sumer and Akkad before they were expelled, leaving very little trace of their reign (Bienkowski 2000:135).

It is during this period that we find a strong prevalence towards ultimate power being in the hands of the reigning sovereign. These kings/gods were considered Enlil's sons and were considered to be good, just rulers. This is evident from the dedicatory hymns to Šulgi which all portray the sovereign as a heroic figure – the ultimate masculine ideal who excels in warfare, languages, politics, hunting, judgement etc (Johandi 2012:22):

> A praise poem of Sulgi (Sulgi A):
> "1-6 I, the king, was a hero already in the womb; I, Šulgi, was born to be a mighty man. I am a fierce-looking lion, begotten by a dragon. I am the king of the four regions; I am the herdsman and shepherd of the black-headed people. I am a respected one, the god of all the lands.
> 48-59 I entered the E-kiš-nu-ĝal like a mountain kid hurrying to its habitation, when Utu spreads broad daylight over the countryside. I filled with abundance the temple of Suen, a cow-pen which yields plenty of fat. I had oxen slaughtered there; I had sheep {offered there lavishly} {(some mss.:) butchered there}. I had šem and ala drums resound there {and caused tigi drums play there sweetly.} {(1 ms. has instead the line:) I …… the balaĝ player (?).} I, Šulgi, who makes everything abundant, presented food-offerings there and, like a lion, spreading fearsomeness from (?) the royal offering-place, I bent down (?) and bathed in flowing water; I knelt down and feasted in the Egal-maḫ of Ninegala" (Black *et al.* 1998c:lines 1-6 and 48-59).

 These ideals, as portrayed through material forms, display the various ideological characteristics that royal ideology attempted to extol in this period.

The Isin-Larsa period (ca. 2000 – 1800) portrayed much the same ideological characteristics as the Ur III period – the political units were what differed. The Mesopotamian political state was no longer dominated by one central political force, but rather divided into smaller political units which all derived their ideological basis from the Ur III examples (Johandi 2012:23).

2.2.5.   The Old Babylonian period (ca. 1894 – 1500 BCE)

The Old Babylonian period somewhat closely resembles the political order of the ED period –
smaller individual city-states that often remained independent entities until a strong ruler
provided unification. The most famous of these is Hammurabi of Babylon – who proved to be
a capable diplomat and wise warrior, enough so as to unite the warring factions and create a
large empire. Perhaps the most notable ideological work from the Old Babylonian period is
the Stele of Hammurabi (cf. 4.2.1). Was it a massive ideological undertaking or was it
regarded as a firm set of rules? Johandi summarizes the interpretation that is followed in this
thesis remarkable well:

"One way of interpreting the "Codex Hammurabi", especially its prologue and epilogue,
would be to regard the stele as a means of royal propaganda, presenting the king as the
righteous ruler and a benefactor for his subordinates, the "king of justice" who "…secured the
eternal well-being of the people and provided just ways for the land" (Johandi 2012:24). Nel,
discussing justice in the ancient Near East, comes to the conclusion that the concept of justice
was the single most important concept connecting the deities to the humans and the kings role
in this concept was that the king was responsible for the just order of his society (2000:146).

This view is reinforced through the iconographic image on the top register of the stele where
Hammurabi is seen in the presence of the god Šamaš – the sun god and the god of justice. The
ideological characteristics of this period are strongly reminiscent of the periods from before –
there are only small changes in the overall political scheme that would have slightly
influenced how it was materialized and interpreted.

2.2.5.1.   The Secularisation/Privatisation of the Old-Babylonian Period

Understanding how the ideology of the Old Babylonian period developed from the previous periods one must examine the secularisation that occurred in the Old Babylonian period. Based upon the available materials from the Larsa area in the south of Mesopotamia Harris (1975) and Yoffee (1977) come to the conclusions that Hammurabi's political style indicates a deliberate secularisation and consolidated control of manufacture and trade. Kuhrt states that these views require a new examination as they are established on misconceptions regarding the role that temples played in earlier periods. Kuhrt goes on to explain that the political control became more centralised due to Hammurabi's conquests (1997:109). Land that was previously owned by other kings became Hammurabi's when he defeated them and therefore he acquired large amounts of land to increase the crowns production and manufacturing capacities (Kuhrt 1997:109-110 and Mcintosh 2005:89).

The phenomenon of privatisation that occurred in the earlier periods prior to Hammurabi's reign greatly influenced the political situation during his reign. The prior privatisation laid the way in that it provided the initial setup that led to a vast secularisation of Hammurabi's Babylon. Van de Mieroop explains that while the temples and palaces still owned the large expanses of land that were able to produce significant quantities of the required goods, there was a move away from these institutions doing the work themselves and a move towards hiring contractors to do the work for them (2011:93).

An example of this is the vital farming sector which initially was farmed by various dependents of the temples and the palace – however due to the process of privatisation, this practice was given over to tenant farmers who handed a percentage of their harvest to the institutions and kept the rest for themselves. In this way, the institutions were no longer required to pay the farmers a salary and keep them fed throughout the year; rather the farmer earned his own wage and was able to feed himself and his family on the surplus that he had left over (van de Mieroop 2011:93).

The large problem of this system became prominent during Hammurabi's reign when due to the fact that these dependent classes (i.e. the tenant farmers and contract administrators) were often in a situation where they were in need of financial assistance from the private citizens of the region. This financial assistance came in the form of credit transactions which often could not be paid back in anyway. This lead to a crisis in terms of the financial stability of Hammurabi's empire and he often had to annul debts. This annulment seems not to have helped, as indicated by the amount of times that it was undertaken (van de Mieroop 2011:114-115).

2.3. CONCLUSION

The development of the ideological characteristics studied in this paper, as the evidence would suggest, seems to have begun during the Early Dynastic period and there seems to have been little change in the various motifs that were used. A notable exception is the period of self-deification. The tendency in Mesopotamia to legitimise the present by making use of the

32

past seems to not only be an ideological motif but also a characteristic of ideological conveyance. Suter (2012:220-221) reinforces this point by stating that "Mesopotamian royal images visualise time and again the quintessential ideology that the people's security and prosperity depended on the ruler due to his relationship with the gods." Suter goes on to state that initially the ruler focused his royal ideological propagation of emphasising his agricultural surplus, hunting prowess and his status as a warrior. However, over time this changes and the focus moves to temple building, war, patronage, and justice (2012:221). This change in the ideological motifs used shows a development in the thought patterns within the political structures underlying the Mesopotamian social structures. Whether gestures are able to significantly portray enough information to carry strong ideological motifs is discussed in the following chapter.

CHAPTER THREE

3.   UNDERSTANDING GESTURE/KINESIC CODES OR NONVERBAL BEHAVIOUR

Gestures form an integral part of daily communication with others and thankfully the scholarly community has realized that to understand communication, these acts of nonverbal behaviour should be studied. However, studying these gestures in the context in which they were originally made is of extreme importance to ensure that they are not misunderstood. Therefore, it is integral to examine the modern theory of gesture and determine how one should incorporate this with the study of ancient images. This chapter then attempts to understand how gestures communicate their intended messages and how these messages should be interpreted.

In his introduction to gestures as manufacturers of meaning, Jürgen Streeck states the following:

> "Movements [gesture] […] are capable of evoking images of objects, scenery, actions, events. They are capable of making the abstract tangible by expressing it in spatial terms. They can visualize speech acts or responses that are sought, or the structures of spoken utterances. And, […], they can find and mark meaning in the world around us: […] Gesture is not in the first place a code, a repertoire of conventional signs with fixed meanings and rules of use and combination. Rather, it is a form of human *practice* – or a *family of practices* -, and these practices in turn make use of a motley crew of methods and component parts." (2009:4)

Understanding, then, how gesture interacts with human conceptions and how humans comprehend various gesture codes or kinesic codes is vitally important. While they are not a method of communication that is universally applicable, gestures do, however, come

34

remarkably close to being a cross cultural form of communication that many are able to understand (Streeck 2009:1). One must use the term 'understand' lightly, as gestures seem, in a modern context, to reinforce spoken utterances far more than occurring as the sole means of communication – McNeill (2000:22) goes as far as saying that gesture and speech are co-expressive, referring to the same underlying thought/idea but expressing it in a unique manner (cf. Streeck 2009:3; Kendon 2004:158-175; Kruger 1989:54). The main difference between gesture and spoken utterances is semiotic in nature: while speech is codified, conventional and linearized, gesture differs in modality, being visuospatial rather than vocalized and auditory, and semiotic ground being indexical and iconic rather than symbolic (Enfield 2005:52).

Kinesic codes are, unlike gesture, often considered to be meaning-carrying devices that are non-speech synchronous – they are forms of bodily postures or gesture-like devices that carry meaning to intended recipients by visually portraying an aspect of speech (Kendon 2004:284). The ability of these codes to carry meaning is what sets them apart from normal gesture, which often simply emphasises the meaning portrayed in the oral message. It is therefore of vital importance to understand how these codes convey their message. McNeill (2000:2-5) proposes the use of Kendon's continuum to differentiate between the various properties of gesture devices and their ability to carry meaning, whether they are speech synchronous or non-speech synchronous codes:

Continuum 1: (relationship to speech)	Gesticulation obligatory presence of speech	→	Emblems optional presence of speech	→	Pantomime obligatory absence of speech	→	Sign Language obligatory absence of speech
Continuum 2: (relationship to linguistic properties)	Gesticulation linguistic properties absent	→	Pantomime linguistic properties absent	→	Emblems some linguistic properties present	→	Sign Language linguistic properties present
Continuum 3: (relationship to conventions)	Gesticulation not conventionalised	→	Pantomime not conventionalised	→	Emblems partly conventionalised	→	Sign Language fully conventionalised
Continuum 4: (character of the semiosis)	Gesticulation global and synthetic	→	Pantomime global and analytic	→	Emblems segmented and synthetic	→	Sign Language segmented and analytic

Kendon's continuum is a useful device for strictly categorising gesture types. However, there is little evidence for codes that are non-speech synchronous – what Kendon does discuss under this format is sign language, which is a universally generalized code. One is able to, if one understands the gesture language that is sign language, communicate fully using this form of gesture. Therefore while it is a non-speech kinesic code, it is a fully grammaticalized gesture language and must be considered, in this study, a fully conventionalized language without speech and thus not a gesture.

Understanding the meaning that gestures attempt to convey is far easier when they are speech synchronous and it has become a far stronger scholarly convention to ensure that gesture accompanies speech to ensure that one is able to infer, from the speech, the meaning of the gestures. This is evident from Gruber's study where he attests to the term *upnī petû*, 'to open the fists' or 'supplicate':

> "*upnīya apteti ilāni usarrir*
>
> *šulmu adanniš*
>
> *ilāni ana šarri bēliya*

u mārēšu iktarbū

I have opened my fists, I prayed to the gods.

The gods have blessed my lord the king

and his sons greatly with well-being." (1980:57-8)

The meaning, when interpreted in the context of the textual source, is easy to understand. It is used to denote divine worship or supplication before one's deities. Understanding the meaning of the action of *upnī petû* without the texts to draw on – i.e. as an iconographic representation (figure 4) – is remarkably more difficult as the kinesic code can invariable be interpreted in more ways than one.
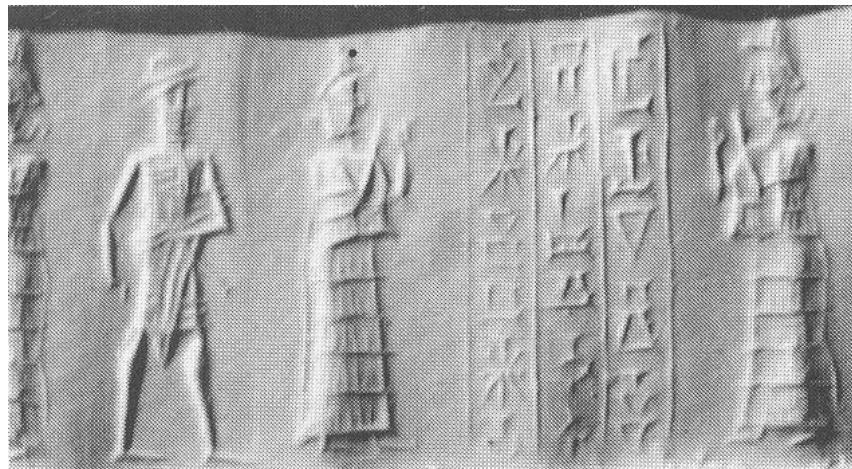
Figure 4: Old Babylonian cylinder seal showing two goddesses supplicating towards an inscription (BM 132840)

(Collon 1986: Plate XLI, Image 582).

Solely interpreting the two female figures without context would make this a task of monumental proportions – the opened handed supplication gesture could be interpreted in a variety of ways: pleading, protection, grief, prayer, wonder, etc. In context, however, it is easy to determine, without the synchronism of speech, that it is a supplication gesture. Both goddesses face an inscription of a king and they are raising their hands in prayer towards it. Therefore, speech is not as important in iconographic representations of gesture, but rather the context in which the gesture is found.

McNeill offers a different solution to the classification of gesture – instead of, like Kendon, forming various continuums which draw on classifications in relation to semiotic references, McNeill (2007:39-40) classifies gesture into four separate types: *beat, deictic, metaphoric,* and *iconic.*

Beat: This gesture type alludes to a musical analogy, specifically referring to the hand beating time.

Deictic: A deictic gesture entails locating an object or entity in a specific space in relation to a point of reference, the most common of this type of gesture involves a raised hand with the index finger extended (i.e. pointing).

Metaphoric: This gesture involves the appearance of a speaker holding an object; however the object is considered to be a metaphor for an idea or message of some sort.

Iconic: These types of gesture present one with images of beings or actions which embody an aspect of semantic content which are also present in speech. These gestures, more than the other types, seem to represent the synchronous

relationship of language and gesture. In other words, this gesture type most often represents speech synchronous gesture.

Again, like Kendon's continuum, none of these gestures help us classify ancient iconographic gesture. The closest one is able to come to a correct classification is by slightly manipulating the definition of the *metaphoric* classification in order to suit our purpose. The *metaphoric* classification can be applied when one removes the 'object that must be held' – the gesture itself helps to convey the overall ideological idea or message of the iconographic material that is studied. McNeill offers the following interpretation concerning these categories of gesture by stating that "[m]etaphorcity in gesture is important for extending the process of an imagery-language dialectic to abstract meanings that lack imagery of their own" (McNeill 2007:45). As with Kendon's continuum, one finds that the context in which the image occurs to be incredibly important. McNeill comes to much the same conclusion concerning any interpretation by noting that one should be aware that they are culture-specific and the gestures will therefore portray a part of the deeply embedded beliefs of a culture. The metaphoric category can be of principle importance to our study as it allows one to "extrapolate imagery to a range of meanings that are not imageable" (McNeill 2007:46).

To understand how gesture influences iconographic representations one must first be able to define it in a manner that will allow one to understand how the iconographic materials will be studied in the later chapters.

3.1.   DEFINING GESTURE

It has already been seen via extrapolation of Kendon and McNeill's arguments that to understand gesture one must note that it is culture specific and thus will not always be universally applicable – however it is remarkably close to being a universal form of communication, albeit communication that would be stilted and perhaps incorrectly interpreted. Even with the importance of gesture to human communication, there is very little agreement between scholars as to how it is actually defined.

Eminent gesture scholars all have some form of a definition that they apply to their studies - Streeck defines gesture as "a family of human *practices*: not as a code or symbolic system or (part of) a language, but as a constantly evolving set of largely improvised, heterogeneous, partly conventional, partly idiosyncratic, and partly culture-specific, partly universal practices of using hands to produce situated understandings" (2009:5). It is argued that it is not only confined to hands, but can include the whole body as a gesture producer. Kendon defines it as "the wide variety of ways in which humans, through visible bodily action, give expression to their thoughts and feeling, draw attention to things, describe things, greet each other, or engage in ritualised actions as in religious ceremonies" (Kendon 2013:71). Kruger, like Kendon, incorporates bodily activity into his definition, stating that nonverbal communication (i.e. gestures) "refers to all ways in which communication is effected between persons when in each others presence by means other than words. It [gesture] is concerned with the communicational function of bodily activity, posture and other types of gesture language which operate in consonance with verbal language" (1989:54). Regardless of all these

definitions differing in a variety of manners, there are common elements to all these authors' discussions which should be taken into account.

The first element to note is that it is a manner of giving expression to images that one cannot readily express via speech or to emphasis an image that one is describing. Although it is not necessary for gesture to be speech synchronous, the use of verbal communication while visually emphasising the point is common. Enfield emphasises this point with a discussion regarding the differing semiotic properties of gesture and speech – in which he points out that speech has certain properties, i.e. it is codified, conventional and linearized. He continues by asserting that visual representations (i.e. gestures) differ with regards to modality – where speech is aural, gestures are visuospatial – and with regards to semiotic ground – where speech is symbolic, gestures are iconic and indexical (Enfield 2005:52).

The second element to note is that there are various classes of gesture/nonverbal behaviour (Malandro, Barker, & Barker 1989:16-23):

1. Body types, shapes, and sizes: The body is an extremely potent nonverbal communicator – especially through the concept of attractiveness; whether a person is aware of their body-image and what their conception of it is influences the manner in which "they experience body distortion, depersonalization, or insecurity about the actual physical boundaries of the body" (Malandro, Barker, & Barker 1989:57).

2. Clothing and personal artefacts: a subtle nonverbal message that is being transmitted which often is an unconscious one. The source of the message (i.e. the wearer) sends a message (via the clothing) which is received by the observer and interpreted – this interpretation can vary according to the culture in which it is taking place, and the message being transmitted can also vary (Malandro, Barker, & Barker 1989:89).

3. Body movement and gestures: The main source of information for the iconographic materials that will be studied later; this class can reveal much through nonverbal expression. Body movements (or kinesic codes) can be broken down into five distinct types – emblems, illustrators, regulators, affect displays, and adaptors.

These three[13] nonverbal behavioural indicators are useful when studying the indicators in ancient Mesopotamian iconographic sources. With all these aspects in mind, we must now define gesture in a manner that is accessible and will satisfy the needs of this study:

Gesture is, for the purposes of this study, defined as the manner in which humans, through various nonverbal indicators, express their emotions either integrated with speech or not. Gesture, in terms of communication, can take place through bodily activity (the movement or placement of various limbs of the body), posture, or through aspects such as clothing or bodily appearance. It is important to note therefore that gesture can invoke entire bodily movement and is not solely limited to hand movement.

---

[13] For the full list of nonverbal behavioural indicators see Malandro, Barker, & Barker 1989:16-23.

3.2.   GESTURE IN ANCIENT MESOPOTAMIAN SOURCES

Now that a feasible definition for the term gesture has been established, the various types that are found in ancient Mesopotamian sources can be studied. Gruber (1980) provides remarkable evidence for the gesture types in the textual sources, however, an iconographic study in monograph form is still lacking[14]. These types have been divided into two distinct categories: micro and macro gestures.

3.2.1.   Micro Gesture

Micro gestures can also be referred to as small body movement gestures. Using the term 'micro' to discuss gesture language is then perhaps a misnomer as the intended ideological message of the iconographic material would have been as obvious to the ancients as that of the 'macro' type. Therefore, it is not the intended message that is being termed as micro, but rather the manner in which the message is being portrayed. The manner of clasping one's hands or raising a hand or finger is less physical and obvious than trampling an enemy or kneeling.

3.2.1.1.   Clasped Hands

The iconographic form of clasped hands is one of the earliest forms of gesture language available to scholars. The earliest form of this gesture language available to scholars at the moment dates to ca. 3300 BCE and was found in Susa (Choksy 2002:9). Numerous statues were found in temple complexes that date from the Early Dynastic II period and it seems to

---

[14] There have, however, been articles that have studied this, for example Cifarelli 1998.

signify that this gesture indicates the veneration of a deity. This is perhaps not entirely true as the Ur-Nanše plaque discussed later (see 4.1.1.) seems to indicate a veneration of the king himself, and not a deity (Choksy 2002:10). The multiplicity of statues with clasped hands that are available to scholars and the conditions in which they were found and used seem to link this form of gesture to veneration. It is noteworthy that Gruber (1980:22-181) does not mention this form of gesture in the chapters concerning prayer and supplication and divine worship. Rather, the literary terms for divine worship and supplication that he discusses are; (1) *upnī petû* – 'open the fists, supplicate', (2) *idī petû* – 'open the hands, pray', (3) *qāta našû* – 'pray', (4) *šukēnu* – 'prostrate oneself, worship, supplicate, prayer', (5) *šukēnu-nagruru* – 'prostrate oneself, rollover', (6) *kamāsu* – 'stoop', (7) *kanāšu* – 'bow down, submit' (Gruber 1980:50,59,60,162,169,171,178).

One must therefore wonder why this form of gesture was excluded from Gruber's study as it is seemingly quite prominent in the Early Dynastic periods, and it is clearly linked to the veneration of deities due to the multiple statues that are dated to these periods (cf. figure 5 and 6).

Figure 5: Standing male worshipper (2750-2600 BCE, Tell Asmar) (http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/works-of-art/40.156)

Figure 6: Standing female figure with clasped cands (2600-2500 BCE, Nippur, Inanna Temple) (http://www.metmuseum.org/toah/works-of-art/62.70.2).

Figure 5, excavated at Tell Asmar, is representative of the Early Dynatic II period. A stone statue portrayed in an abstract style, it is remarkable in that it represented the beginnings of monumental stone sculpture in Mesopotamia (Evans 2012:48). The placement of the statues above also lends significance to the interpretation of the gesture as one of praise and worship. The statues were not placed in the immediate vicinity of the cult statue, but rather along the walls of the temples – thus imitating the devotees in the temples (Evans 2012:88-89). The frontal manner of representation, much like that of early portrayals of goddesses (Asher-

Greve 2006:35), allows for ritual communication between humans and the statues. The statues acted as an intermediary between the deity and worshippers (Evans 2012:178).

These statues, both excavated in temples, are clear indicators that this form of gesture was used to praise and worship divinities. This gesture persists throughout the eras in Mesopotamian history and consistently seems to denote a veneration of some kind.

3.2.1.2.   Raised Hand

According to Gruber (1980:83-4) this term is referred to in Akkadian as *qāta našû* (translated as 'lift the hand') and in later periods as *qāta dekû* (translated as 'lift the hand' or 'entreat') – this gesture falls under the broad category of worship or supplication. Interestingly, the examples that Gruber provides delineate a clear distinction in terms of the usage of these two terms in accordance with time periods. I.e. one of the first literary references to this term is from the Old Babylonian period and states the following:

"kamisma Gilgameš [ina maḫar] Šamaš
awat iqabbû [   ]
allak Šamaš qātīya [annašī]
ullânu lušlima napištī
terranni ana kāri ša [Uruk]
ṣil[la]m šukun elīya

Gilgamesh stoops [before] Shamash.
The word he speaks [   ]
"I go, Shamash, [I lift] my hands.
Henceforth may I make it well for myself.
Bring me back to the harbour of [Uruk].
Pr[ot]ect me"" (Gruber 1980:63).

The literature cited here seems to suggest that this form of gesture is linked with the worship of a deity – Gilgamesh, the legendary king, lifts his hands in supplication before Shamash asking for protection during his journey. The later periods see a change in the usage of this gesture as it is no longer used in terms of the protection of a king, but rather used when Ashurbanipal seeks the assistance of Ishtar in smiting his enemies.

"*allāku hanṭu ina qered Ninua illikamma*
ušannâ yâti eli epšēti annâti
libbī ēgugma iṣṣaruh kabittī
ašši qātēya uṣalli Aššur u Ištar aššurītu
adke amēlu emūqīya sīrāte ša Aššur u Ištar
amallû qātū'a ana māt Muṣur u māt Kusi
uštēšera ḫarrānu

A quick courier came to me to Ninevah,
and he told me about these things.
I became angry and upset. I lifted my
hands; I supplicated Assur and Assyrian Ishtar.
I called up my august strong-arm troops, whom
Assur and Ishtar entrusted to me. I proceeded
directly to Egypt and Ethiopia" (Gruber 1980:65).

The act of the king entreating a god for military victory evolves into the act of people entreating the king; thus the king begins to place himself in the position of the deity and in this manner subtly links himself to the divine sphere, further embedding his ideology onto the system, for example:

"*qātēni ana šarri*
bēlini nidekki
Ayaru agâ kapdu lišpurannâšimma
mātu ana ša šarri tatūr u anēni
ardānika nibluṭ

47

We beseech the king our lord
that the king our lord may send us troops
quickly this Iyyar, so that the land
will return to the king and we,
your servants, shall live" (Gruber 1980:85-6).

The translation of the above inscription uses the word beseech to indicate the raised hands action. All the inscriptions above give some clue as to the variety of manners in which the gesture can be used. These gestures are reiterated in the iconographic works of the Mesopotamian empires and we see the same themes being repeated throughout the various periods (cf. 4.1.2. below and figures 7, 8, and 9). The prevalence of artefacts that represent such gestures most definitely indicates that this form of nonverbal communication was important in ancient Mesopotamia, regardless of the ruling regime. It is therefore likely that an aspect of this gesture can be a religious communicative device intended to show deference from one party to the other – i.e. a king showing piousness to a god or goddess.

A further aspect of this gesture includes the act of deference from a member of the citizenry to the king – i.e. in literary devices through the use of the word beseech (cf. Gruber 1980:75-6 above), and in iconographic materials through the raised hand being aimed at a king (cf. figure 9).

These two gesture forms – micro gestures – require little body movement and serve to show deference to an authority figure of sort, whether it be a courtier showing deference to a king or a king showing it to a god – they both contribute to the royal ideology in a meaningful way.

Figure 7: A stele fragment from a temple sanctuary in Uruk, showing an incised representation of a goddess with her hands raised towards to symbols of high pantheon deities, c. 9000-7000 BCE (Crüsemheon 2013:35).

Figure 8: Inlay from a bull lyre; depicting a banquet scene with the main banqueter seated and his attendants in a line in front of him showing the beseeching or benediction gesture, c. 2550 – 2400 BCE (Aruz & Wallenfels 2003:107).

Figure 9: A cultic image of a goddess with a raised hand, in a "gesture of peace and benediction", c. early 2nd

millennium (Aruz, Benzel & Evans 2008:46).

3.2.2.   *Macro Gesture*

Macro gesture, as with the term micro gesture, does not necessitate that the ideological message being portrayed is 'macro', but rather that the manner in which the message, through the gesture, is being portrayed. The manner of body placement and action being portrayed through the nonverbal communicative device is what lends to the gesture being termed macro. The two types of body posture/gesture/nonverbal communicative device that will be examined under this category are bowing/supplication and trampling/crushing.

3.2.2.1. Bowing/Supplication/Prostration

This form of nonverbal communication presents what one would assume to be a rather obvious ideological message to the modern reader – the figure bowing is worshipping/entreating/showing obeisance to the standing. Literary devices refer to three terms to denote this gesture: bow down '*kanāšu*', the kiss of obeisance '*ina pān PN qaqqara nuššuqu / šēpē PN našāqu/nuššuqu / šēpē PN sabātu*' or *šukênu* (Gruber 1980:254-7).

Beginning with the latter, *šukênu*, we find that this, although literally meaning 'to prostrate oneself' was argued by scholars to mean 'to lift the finger to the mouth' – for example by Pope, who stated:

> This gesture is apparently represented by the beautiful statuette of bronze and gold (7 5/8 inches high) from Larsa [15], representing the kneeling worshipper Awil-Nannar who dedicated the object for the life of Hammurabi, King of Babylon. The worshipper's hand is before his mouth, but a few inches away… Perhaps the gesture made by Awil-Nannar is that designated by the Akkadian verb šukênu which some scholars interpret as a gesture performed with the hand; cf. A. Goetze, JNES 4 (1945), 248, n. 12, and the literature there cited" (Pope 1973:206 quoted in Gruber 1980:240).

However, Gruber seems not to agree with Pope and in fact argues against his interpretation stating that Pope was simply using evidence from Goetze, who provided very little evidence for his argument (Gruber 1980:240-1). This statue might also be throwing a kiss of homage which is discussed in chapter 4.2.2.

---

[15] Cf. Chapter 4.2.2

The direct translation of *šukênu* as 'to prostrate oneself' can lead one to assume that it implies a literal prostration, and whilst this is often true, dependent on context, it can also mean 'submit to' or 'bow before'. The term *šukênu* usually refers to an action taking place before a king or a god, as is evident from Heidel's translations (1940:55):

šarru a-na bît ili [ir]-rab <u>uš-ka-an</u>

šiptu an-ni-tú 3-šú ina maḫar ištar

tamannû-ma uš-kin

The king [en]ters the temple (and) prostrates himself

Three times thou shalt recite this incantation before

Ishtar, and he shall prostrate himself.

Evident from the above examples is the physical act of prostration. A king prostrates himself in a temple and a man prostrates himself before Ištar; this already influences the ideology significantly. The prostration of a king before a deity shows his piety and thus further cements his rule, as a king was the leader of state religion.

3.2.2.2.   Trampling

There is a remarkable lack of studies done on trampling the enemy within iconographic sources[16]. This makes this study rather difficult. While many have briefly mentioned trampling, there is very little research done on any aspect closely resembling a theoretical

study. Gruber does not include this nonverbal communicative device in his study. Whether this is due to the fact that he does not believe it is a gesture or because his study is mostly worship gestures is unclear.

Trampling, in its simplest connotation references the complete submission of one unto another – most often through violent means. Wagner describes the phenomenon as "Wer mit seinem Fuss auf jemanden tritt, der *beherrscht ihn*, wer sich unter den Füssen befindet, *wird beherrscht*" (2010:141). Take for example the Victory Stele of Naram-Sin [17] – Bahrani (2008:107) describes the stele as a monument that is not concerned with the divinity of a king but rather one in which the focus is centred on the physical aggression of the king, through the action of him trampling the enemy underfoot. The stele of Naram-Sin is one of the earliest and most powerful examples of the ideology of trampling; however, there are many other examples of this form of nonverbal communication.

Cornelius (2009:18) examines a rock relief dated from ca. 2000 B.C.E. at Sarpol-i Zohāb in Iran (cf. figure 10). The king carries the bow and arrow and an axe whilst trampling a naked enemy while the deity Ištar holds two bound enemies with a rope which is tied to rings in their noses. Underneath the king there file nude enemies, a symbol of their defeat. Their hands are also bound and while there is a barrier between the king and them, he is standing right above them on their heads, symbolising the indirect trampling of these captives.

---

[17] Cf. chapter 5.2.2.
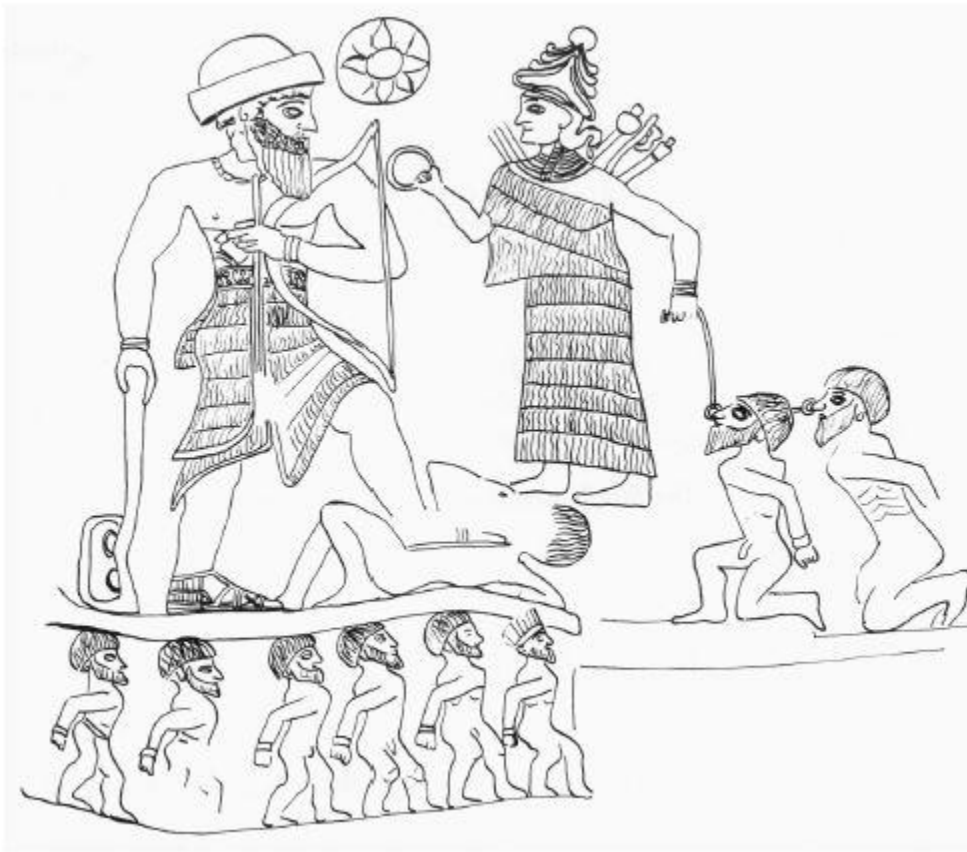
Figure 10: Sarpol-i Zohāb rock relief, ca. 2000 B.C.E. (Cornelius 2009:31)

Trampling not only represents the physical subjugation of one enemy by another, but these representations that commemorate the victory provide the mental subjugation by the victor. If these were placed in areas that allowed for the conquered peoples to see them then they most likely provided a constant reminder of the defeat and subsequent subjugation of their peoples. However, due to this rock relief being high up on a cliff, it seems likely that not many people would have seen the details of the scene and therefore it is possible that this ideological scene was intended for the deities, who were often intended recipients of iconographical scenes.

While these iconographic representations perfectly show the action of trampling – inscriptions make it possible to understand how the ancient Mesopotamians viewed this action. On the Stele of Daduša (cf. Figure 11), ca. 1790-1780 B.C.E., an inscription explains how the king conquers his enemies:

> Above the wall of Dur-Qabara is Banu-Ishtar, the King of the land of Arbil. I bound him in my power. (I) stand upon him. He whom I furiously defeat with my powerful weapon, I am standing on top of him. I am standing like a young hero. Below, ferocious heroes hold enemies carefully with a rope (Bahrani 2008:142).

Here both the motif of trampling and of holding the enemy by a rope are succinctly explained by the king. It shows the actions which took place during the battle and the king likens himself to the mythical heroes of the Mesopotamian eras. The king, however, does not seem to equate the action of trampling with the physical defeat of an enemy, rather he smites the enemy with his weapon and then shows superiority by standing on the enemy triumphantly.

It is possible then from the literary source above to explain that, while trampling was considered a physical act to aggression, it was also used by kings to show their triumph over their enemy. The act itself is not the most important aspect of the trampling communicative device, but rather the message that it is meant to convey.
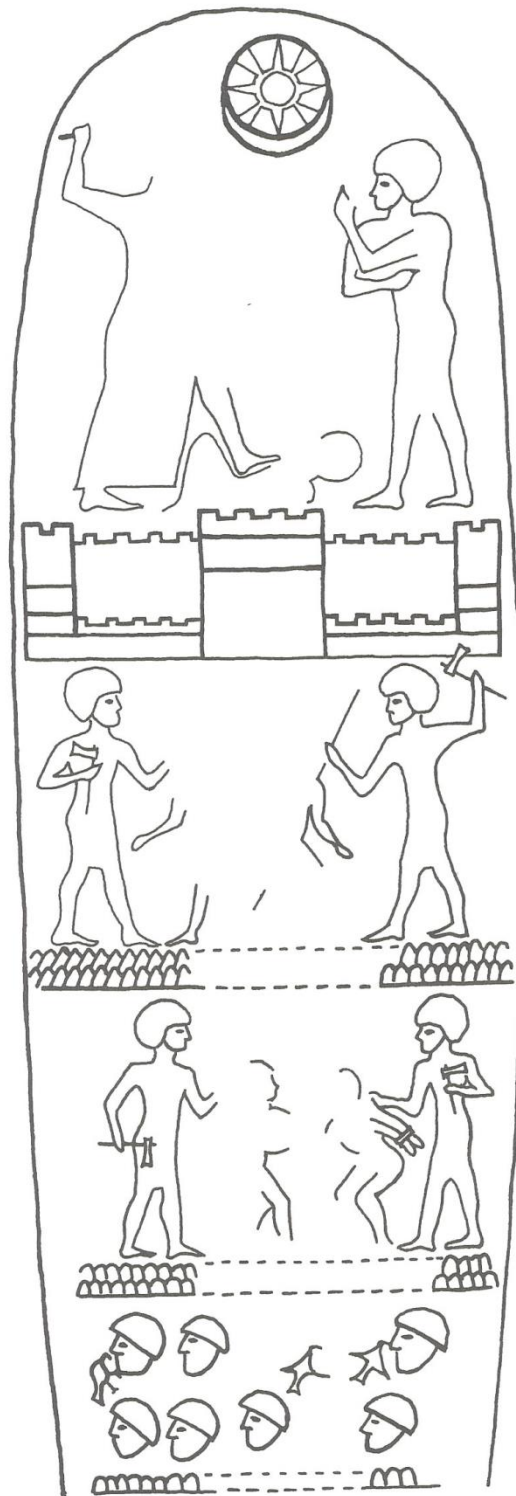
Figure 11: The Stele of Daduša (Chavalas 2006:100)

3.3.   SUMMARY

The fact that the message is the most important aspect can be said about all the gestures examined above; the act is secondary to the message that is being portrayed, and all messages contain an ideological connotation. These connotations are what influence the modern reader and surely must have influenced the ancient viewer.

If one understands that these messages were of the utmost importance in these ancient iconographic works, as was explained in chapter two, then the study of gestures in ancient Mesopotamian representations becomes an important aspect to this study. This will therefore receive due attention in the following two chapters (i.e. Chapter Four and Five), examining how these gestures interact with the representation as a whole and how they convey the message that they were intended to convey.

CHAPTER FOUR

4.   THE ICONOGRAPHY OF MICRO-GESTURE FORMS

4.1.   *ICONOGRAPHIC TYPE – CLASPED HANDS*

The first gesture to be studied is that of clasped hands, perhaps one of the oldest forms of veneration. Statues of worshippers at temples practicing this gesture dating to the Early Dynastic II period have been discovered at Tell Asmar (Parrot 1961a: Pls. 129-130; Amiet 1980: Pls. 35-36; Choksy 2002:9)[18]. It seems unlikely that this form of gesture was linked solely to the veneration of deities for the entire period of Mesopotamian history – perhaps initially in 3300 BCE[19] and continuing into the Early Dynastic periods. However, after this point there is evidence that this form of gesture was used to venerate kings – the relief of Ur-Nanše provides an excellent example.

This iconographic type usually includes figures with their hands clasped together; whether it is the palm of one hand placed into the other (cf. fig 12), the right hand clasping the left wrist (cf. fig 13), or one hand placed entirely over the other[20] they all broadly fall under the gesture type of clasped hands. This pose, usually in deference to a deity or sovereign, indicates veneration and was often found in temples, on religious iconographic materials, or materials alluding to war scenes – often showing enemy combatants beseeching a victorious monarch for mercy.

---

[18]For information on statues see Marchesi & Merchetti 2011.
[19] Cf. Amiet 1980: Pls. 237-239 for statues of citizens of Susa using a prototype of this gesture.
[20] Cf. Parrot 1961a: Pl. 145.

Figure 12: Figure with one hand place into the other (Aruz & Wallenfels 2003:pl. 24a).

Figure 13: Figure with right hand claspting left wrist (Aruz & Wallenfels 2003:pl. 306).

4.1.1.   *Limestone Relief of Ur-Nanše*

CH1; Louvre Museum AO 2344, Near Eastern Antiquities, Richelieu Wing, Room 1a, Display case 5: Period of the Old Sumerian dynasties; Telloh (ancient Girsu), De Sarzec excavations, 1888.

Object: Rectangular limestone votive relief divided into two registers. Light brown colour, 39 cm (h) × 46.50 cm (w) × 6.50 cm (d). Dates to the Early Dynastic III period, c. 2550 – 2500 BCE.

Figure 14: Votive relief of Ur-Nanše, King of Lagaš (Museé du Louvre -

http://cartelen.louvre.fr/cartelen/visite?srv=car_not_frame&idNotice=11346&langue=en [visited – 08/10/2014])

Description: Upper Register – Three bald male figures in skirts stand on the right of the plaque with hands clasped in front of their chests; on their skirts there are inscriptions. In front of these figures a male figure with a chignon stands holding a vessel and one hand placed over his chest; on his skirt there is an inscription. These figures are preceded by a larger figure dressed in full fleece dress with one shoulder bare and with long hair or possibly a headdress (cf. Figure 15 for a better image of similar clothing). Similarly, this figure clasps its hands in front of its chest and too looks to the left, below this figure there is an inscription.

This figure is the cause of speculation as to whether it is male or female (cf. Figure 15 for a better image of a female figure wearing similar clothing)[21]. Hansen (2003:31) claims that these figures are the family of Ur-Nanše, four sons and possibly a daughter. Perkins (1957:57) chooses not to comment, rather stating that via the inscriptions one is able to determine that they are the children of the sovereign. The large male figure facing the other five wears a fleece skirt and is carrying a basket of earth or archetypal bricks on his head with his right hand, with his left hand raised to his chest with the palm spread out extending the fingers, both to the right and left of this figure are inscriptions. Behind the large figure stands a small figure who carries a cup in both hands and whose face is completely obscured. This figure wears a skirt and below the figure is an inscription.

Figure 15: Priestess of Mari (Parrot 1953:52-3)

Lower Register – Three smaller bald male figures stand in skirts facing the right. They all hold both hands clasped to their chests and on their skirts are inscriptions. A slightly larger

---

21 This figure bears close resemblance to the female figures from the Sin Temple VIII at Khafajeh (cf. Frankfort 1943:pl. 26 no. 250).

male figure precedes them also in a skirt facing the right. However, he holds his hands across his chest in an X allowing his forearms to touch, but not his hands. On this figure's skirt there is an inscription. The large bald male figure seated is holding his left arm up and has placed his left hand on his chest while he holds a cup in the right hand. He wears a fleece skirt like the large figure in the upper register and his left hand is spread out extending the fingers in the same manner. On the right and left of this figure are inscriptions. Behind this figure there stands a small male figure wearing a skirt, holding a cup in his right hand and holding his left hand to his chest. On the figure's skirt there is an inscription.

Identification: The large figure carrying the basket in the upper register and seated in the lower can be identified as Ur-Nanše; the inscription in the upper register tells the reader that "Ur-Nanshe […] built the temple of Nanshe, built the Abzubandu" (Cooper 1986:22). The inscriptions on each of the figures facing the sovereign indicate that they are his children, with the small cup-bearing figure behind the sovereign being his cup-bearer (Hansen 2003:31).

Inscription: Upper Register (next to figure of Ur-Nanše) "Urnanshe, king of Lagash, son of Gunidu, "son" of Gursar, built the temple of Ningirsu, built the temple of Nanshe, built the Abzubanda"; (cupbearer on right hand side of Ur-Nanshe) "Anita"; (row of figures facing king from right to left) "Abda, a daughter; Akurgal, a son; Lugalezen, a son; Anikura, a son; Mukurmushta, a son" (Cooper 1986:22)

Lower Register (next to seated Ur-Nanshe) "Urnanshe, king of Lagash, had ships of Dilmun transport timber from foreign lands (to Lagash)"; (cupbearer to left of king)

"Sagantuk"; (row of figures facing king left to right) "Balul, <chief snake>-charmer; Anunpad, a son; Menusud, a son; Addatur, a son" (Cooper 1986:23).

Ideological Description: The most obvious ideological motif present in this image is that of the king as a builder – the king is clearly praised for his willingness to construct temples to the gods. Both the iconographic material (the king with a basket of bricks on his head on the top register and the libation scene on the bottom register) and the inscription attest to this. Bahrani emphasises the ideological importance of this act by stating that "the king bearing a basket of bricks is a trace of an ancient ritual of building […] this act itself is performative […] by going through the process of the act itself, the temple's sacred quality is achieved" (Bahrani 2009:157). The importance of this is further emphasised by the foundation figures from a variety of Mesopotamian periods. The figurines are an amalgamation of the body of a human and the post itself which portray a person holding a basket of building materials above their head (cf. figures 16, 17, and 18). The addition of the building materials basket on these figurines marks the ideological importance of this motif (van Buren 1931:17) A less noticeable motif is present in the figure of the king himself – his physical being is portrayed as far larger than any other, thus marking him as a figure of extreme importance. The three tiered skirt that the king wears furthermore marks him as a being of importance (Aruz & Wallenfels 2003:71)

The importance of the gesture is noted as it is the royal family who are in the process of venerating their father, Ur-Nanše. These gestures that these figures are making bear close resemblance to the early worshippers from the Nintu Temple V at Khafajeh (cf. Frankfort

1943: pl. 2 no. 209; pl. 3 no. 209; pl. 4 no. 210-11; pl. 5 no. 212; pl. 6 no. 213; pl. 9 no. 217 – cf. figure 19). These early statues were used to mark correct veneration of the gods and thus the ideological importance of figures worshipping a king in the same manner cannot be understated.

Figure 18: Ur-Ningirsu basket foundation peg (van Buren 1931:pl.VIII)
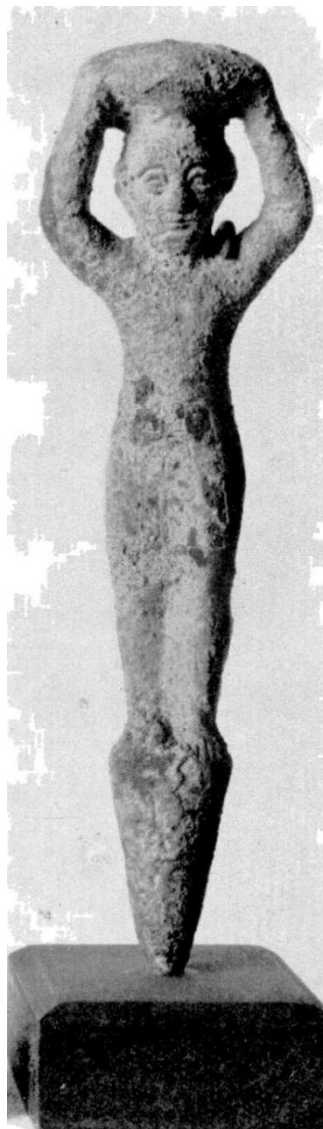
Figure 17: Gudea basket foundation peg (van Buren 1931:pl.VIII).

Figure 16: Warad-Sin basket foundation peg (van Buren 1931:pl.XIII).
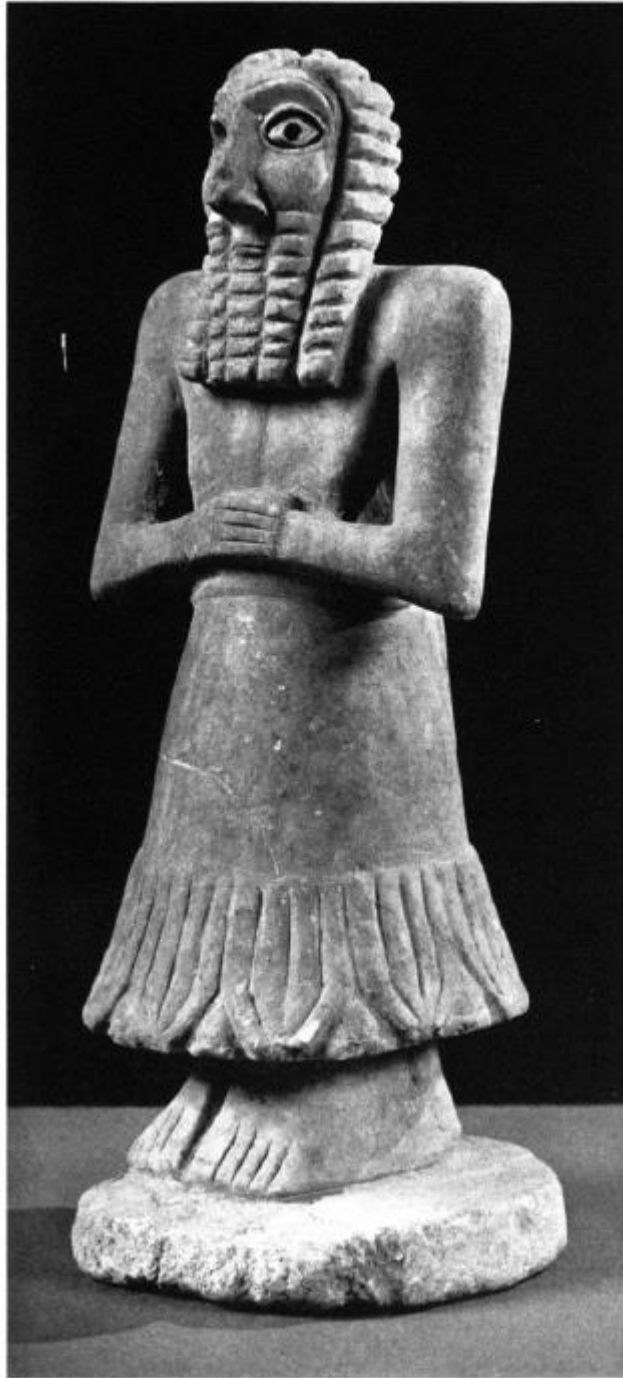
Figure 19: Nintu Temple V worshipper (Frankfort 1943: pl. 2 no 209).

4.1.2.   Seated Statue of Gudea: Architect with Plan

CH2; Louvre Museum AO 2, Near Eastern Antiquities, Richelieu Wing, Room 2; Telloh (ancient Girsu); Court A of the Palace of Adad-nadin-ahi; De Sarzac excavations, 1881.

Object: Diorite headless statue, black colour, 93 cm (h) × 41 cm (w) × 61 cm (d). Dates to Second Dynasty of Lagash period, c. 2090 BCE.

Plan: 28. 5 cm (l) × 16.5 cm (w)

Figure 20: Seated statue of Gudea – Architect with Plans (Aruz & Wallenfels 2003: no. 304)
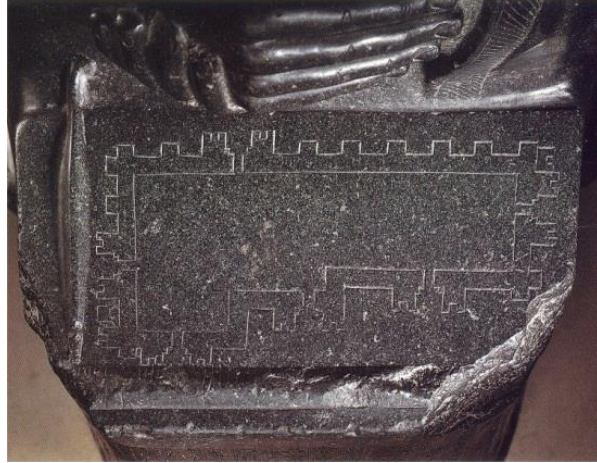
Figure 21: Seated statue of Gudea – Architect with Plans (Detail) (Aruz and Wallenfels 2003: details no. 304)

Description: A headless diorite statue, portraying a seated man with legs apart (Aruz & Wallenfels 2003:427) and the bare feet set together. The hands are clasped together in the palm-to-palm method and placed in front of the chest. The man is portrayed wearing "a long royal mantle with a fringed edge; one section covers his left arm, and the other is pulled under his right arm and tucked into the front forming folds" (André-Salvini 2003:427). An inscription covers the majority of the statue, and on the knees of the statue there is an architectural plan, a stylus, and a rule which are engraved into the statue.

Identification: The headless statue represents the king of Lagaš, Gudea. The inscription allows us to identify the ruler, even without the head, and the stylistic representation is similar to many other iconographic representations of the sovereign (Suter 2000:57).

Inscription:

Column II

67

1-3)   For Ningirsu, mighty warrior of Enlil,

4-7)   did Gudea, who has a "treasured" name, ruler of Lagaš,

8-11)   shepherd chosen in the heart of Ningirsu, whom Nanše regarded in a friendly manner,

12-15) to whom Nin-dara gave strength, the one keeping to the word of Bau,

16-19) child born of Gatumdu, to whom Ig-alim gave prestige and a lofty sceptre,

Column III

1-5)   whom Šul-šaga richly provided with breath of life, whom Ningišzida, his (personal) god, made stand out gloriously as the legitimate head of the assembly –

6-11)   when Ningirsu had directed his meaningful gaze on his city, had chosen Gudea as the legitimate shepherd in the land, and when he had selected him by his hand from among 216,000 persons –

12)   (for Ningirsu did Gudea then) cleanse the city, let (purifying) fire go over it.

13-14) He set up the brick-mould, determined the (first) brick by means of an oracle.

15)   Persons ritually unclean, unpleasant to look at(?),

Column IV

1-6)   …, …, (and) women doing work he banished from the city; no woman would carry the basket, only the best of the warriors would work for him.

7-9)   He built Ningirsu's House on ground that was as clean as Eridu (itself).

10-12) No one was lashed by the whip or hit by the goad, no mother would beat her child.

13-19) Governor, inspector, overseer, levy supervisor, (whoever) stood watching work, supervision was, in their hands, as (soft) as combed wool.

Column V

12-14) (Gudea) made things function as they should for his lord Ningirsu,

15-20) he built and restored for him his Eninnu, the White Thunderbird, and within (that complex) he installed for him his beloved grove(?), (in) the scent (of) cedars.

21-27) When he was about to build the House of Ningirsu, Ningirsu, his master who loves him, opened for him (all) the roads leading from the Upper to the Lower Sea (Edzard 1997:31-33).

Ideological Description: The inscription forms a large part of the ideological motif, showing clear deference to the god Ningirsu and how Gudea is blessed and favoured by many gods. It marks how Gudea was chosen by the gods to rule the country and ensure its prosperity. The inscription also emphasises Gudea's role in the construction of the temple of Ningirsu, the E-ninnu, by stating how he purified the city before laying the foundation of the temple (André-Salvini 2003:427).

The architectural plan most likely depicts an enclosure of the sanctuary of Ningirsu – which emphasises traditional Mesopotamian building techniques and areas where the statues may have stood or altars may have been present (Aruz and Wallenfels 2003:427).

In addition to the religious aspects of the ideological message, the material used in the construction of the statue (i.e. diorite) conveys a strong ideological message – Gudea maintained extensive trade routes. Hansen (1988:8) emphasises this by stating that "[o]verseas trade through the gulf was extensive, continuing the contacts that had been made in much earlier times. From Dilmun, Magan, and Meluhha (probably Bahrain, Oman, and coastal India) came diorite and other stones for statues, rare woods, carnelian, lapis lazuli,

gold, and copper along with other highly prized commodities not found in southern Mesopotamia." Maintaining these trade routes and contacts reinforces the idea that Gudea was continuing the legacy of the previous rulers – linking himself to past rulers – and that he was well suited to the monumental task of the administration of an empire. The use of diorite not only shows that Gudea was linking himself to past rulers, but also testifies to his commercial acumen (Nigro 1998:86).

The importance of the gesture that is present can only be fully understood when the above aspects are taken into account – the religious aspect of the statue reinforces the claim that the gesture is linked to the veneration of a deity (cf. the Khafajeh statues). The statue was made to be placed in a sanctuary dedicated to Ningirsu (likely the one depicted on the 'plans') and it clearly emphasises the ideological motif of royal building activity – not only does it state in the inscription that Gudea built many temples but the plans reinforce this view and are a strong indication that Gudea relied strongly on this ideological technique.

The gesture, which is present in many statues of Gudea and was quite common among representations in the second dynasty of Lagaš, can be understood as a strong ideological technique emphasising Gudea's religious nature. The hands, tightly clasped together and neatly folded below the breast of the statue impart a respectful quality to the statue and gives the venerative aspect of the statue more prominence.

4.2.   ICONOGRAPHIC TYPE – RAISED HANDS

The raised hands gesture type is again, much like the clasped hands, used to indicate veneration of some kind. Whether it be to a deity from a king, from a worshipper to a deity or from a citizen to a ruler the meaning behind the gesture remains largely similar, as is evident from the two examples examined below.

4.2.1.   Stele of Hammurabi

RH1; Louvre Museum Sb 8, Near Eastern Antiquities, Richelieu Wing, Room 3, Susa, J. de Morgan Excavations; 1901-1902.

Object: Diorite Stele, black colour, 2.25m (h). Dates to Old Babylonian Period, c. 1930 – 1888 BCE.

Figure 22: The Stele of Hammurabi (Strommenger 1964: no. 158)

Figure 23: The Stele of Hammurabi (detail) (Strommenger 1964: no. 159)

Description: The stele measures approximately 2.25m in height and is carved out of black diorite and is shaped in an irregular fashion – one could state it slightly resembles an index finger. The inscribed text forms a major part of the stele, covering the entire stele except for the top front section. The text contains the prologue, approximately three hundred individual

72

laws and the epilogue which is carved into forty-two columns (Feldman 2008:317). The iconographic material to be studied, here represented in figure 23 above, forms, in comparison to the text, a minor aspect of the stele. However, its importance cannot be understated. Positioned in the upper portion of the front of the stele are two male figures; the seated male figure wears the horned crown typical of divinities[22], is seated upon a throne that resembles a niched temple façade and exceptionally, as this convention was abandoned half a millennia earlier, rays appear to be emerging from behind the figure's shoulders (Collon 2007:61). The figure wears a full robe with only his right shoulder uncovered. Here emphasis is placed upon his masculine form – with muscles clearly visible. The figure has a full length beard and wears what seems to be a necklace. The seated figure is barefoot and beneath his feet is a scale pattern which is typically used to iconographically represent a mountain (Bahrani 2009:158). The figure's left hand is raised into a fist in front of his chest while the right is extended towards the other figure and is holding the ring and rod (cf. the ideological description below).

The standing figure faces the seated figure and is lower than the seated figure, as the seated figure sits on a throne above a mountain pattern (Collon 2007:58). The figure is fully robed with the exception of his right arm which is bare and clearly emphasises the masculine form, through clearly visible muscle forms. The figure has a full beard and his left arm is folded across his abdomen with the robe flowing over the arm in a draped fashion. The figures right arm is raised in front of his face with his palm facing inwards. The figure wears a headdress that covers the top of the head in a bowl like fashion.

---

[22] Cf. page 21.

Identification: The large seated figure represents the god Šamaš; the sun rays and multitier crown are clear iconographic motifs of the deity. Šamaš is described as having, by Black and Green, three aspects: he is described as being 'long-armed' and bearded; he is the god of truth, justice and right; and he often had an interest in the affairs of mankind (1994:184). Figure 24, below, gives a clear image of Šamaš during the Akkadian period, in which he was often represented (Black and Green 1994:183). It is clear from the image that the sun rays were a common iconographic motif, along with the pruning saw which is common in such cylinder seals. The scale pattern beneath the feet of Šamaš, representing a mountain, are used to further provide evidence that this deity is in fact the sun god – as the sun rises from behind the mountains each day.

Figure 24: The god Šamaš as portrayed on an Akkadian cylinder seal. (Black & Green 1994:183)

The standing figure represents the king Hammurabi. The inscription verifies this for the reader. However, without the inscription, one could still verify this due to the close resemblance to other images of the king (cf. figure 25 below) and the various items of clothing that he wears. The hat is a device which was used to portray the king. Although this was usually only used during rituals, the king here ensures that there is an iconographical device which portrays him as ruler (Suter 1991-3:66). This iconographical device is perhaps a very unobtrusive one, as compared to the device used to portray the importance of Hammurabi – his entering into the divine sphere.

Figure 25: Limestone votive monument depicting King Hammurabi (British Museum - http://www.britishmuseum.org/research/collection_online/collection_object_details.aspx?objectId=368812&partId=1&searchText=hammurapi&people=93430&material=18381&page=1 [accessed 08/10/2014])

Inscription: To examine the entire inscription would be a laborious process, one which would not contribute much to this study and thus only a few small excerpts from the prologue will be examined:

> When the august god Anu, king of the Anunnakū deities, and the god Enlil, lord of heaven and earth, who determines the destinies of the land, allotted supreme power over all people to the god Marduk, the firstborn son of Ea, exalted him among the Igigū-deities, named the city of Babylon with its august name and made it supreme within the regions of the world, and established for him within it eternal kingship whose foundations are as fixed as heaven and earth.

> At that time, […] me […], Hammurabi, the pious prince who venerates the gods, to make justice prevail in the land, to abolish the wicked and the evil, to prevent the strong from oppressing the weak, to rise like the sun-god Shamash over all humankind, to illuminate the land.

> I am Hammurabi, the shepherd, selected by the god Enlil, he who heaps high abundance and plenty, who perfects every possible things for the city Nippur, (the city known as) band-of-heaven-and-earth, the pious provider of the Ekur temple; (Roth 1997:76-77).

Ideological Description: While previous kings might have deified themselves, Hammurabi enters the sacred sphere, quite literally, by placing himself directly next to the deity. Bahrani

concludes that "the space of the sacred and the profane is merged in ways that are more alarming than in earlier works of Mesopotamian kings where there is a transfiguration of the king into a divinity" (Bahrani 2009:158). The manner in which the king and god face each other, seeming to stare into one another's eyes places emphasis upon their relationship as almost seeming to be equals. Hammurabi's left arm mirrors Šamaš' arm in the manner in which it is placed and his clothing, the right shoulder being bare, is again a mirror of the deity's. The two figures are almost identical and thus this subconsciously influences the manner in which the reader considers the relationship between Hammurabi and Šamaš.

The Ring and Rod – A Preliminary Excursion

The relationship discussed above will benefit from a brief examination of the ring and rod symbol. This symbol existed in Mesopotamian visual images, in some form, for over two thousand years and to this day still perplexes scholars with regards to its meaning. Over the past century there have been a variety of interpretations regarding the symbols and these will be briefly discussed in this section. Currently, the two leading interpretations are that the symbol represents measuring devices or that the symbol represents the nose rope and staff. Metaphorically, the first interpretation, concerns itself with the meting out of justice while the second concerns itself with the kings ability to lead the people (Slanski 2007:41).

The first metaphorical interpretation is the most commonly accepted amongst a variety of scholars, including but not limited to: Frankfort, Black & Green, Jacobsen, and Slanski. Frankfort seems to have been the first scholar to have come to this conclusion based upon the braided rope and the evidence of the symbol on the Stele of Hammurabi (1965:179). He was,

however, certainly not the last. Black & Green state that the ring and rod were a symbol of "divine justice" (1994:156) and Slanski comes to the conclusion that this symbol was used to signify the laying of straight foundations which were meant to metaphorically "reveal to the ruler the means for making foundations or guiding people 'straight'" (2007:51). Van Buren challenges this assertion by stating "that the symbol always signified divine power, [however there is], no convincing evidence to prove that the symbol was originally a measuring rod and line […]. The few literary allusions which refer to the symbol imply that the rod and ring were of lapis lazuli, gold, or some non-pliable substance ill-adapted to the purpose of a measuring rod and line" (1949:449-450).

Making use of the literary illusions cannot be used to formulate this logic however, as Slanksi pointed out that Mesopotamian literary imagery often depicted gods and heroes having lapis lazuli beards (2007:42). Therefore, it is unlikely that the ring and rod were made out of these, but rather that these literary devices of using gold or lapis lazuli were meant to emphasise importance (cf. 4.2.2).

This importance is further emphasised by the fact that there is no evidence of a king or minor deity, i.e. a deified king, ever seen carrying the symbol; it is only ever represented as being carried by the major deities (van Buren 1949:449, Spycket 2000:651, and Slanski 2007:42). Although archaeological evidence indicates that this symbol is carried by a variety of major deities, it is most commonly associated with Šamaš and Innana/Ištar.

The "Burney Relief" (or "Queen of the Night" plaque) is evidence for this, where an unknown goddess (possibly Innana) is shown holding the symbol in both hands which are raised above her shoulders. Textual sources which link the ring and rod symbol to Inanna (a possible interpretation of the figure depicted) are well known in Sumerian literature. In *Inana's descent to the netherworld*, line 25 states that "[s]he held the lapis-lazuli measuring rod and measuring line in her hand" (Black *et al*. 1998b: line 25). This is further reinforced by Asher-Greve & Westenholz (2013:47-8) who state that "[t]wo narrative compositions revolve around the couple, the god Ama-ushum-gal and his beloved, the goddess, Inana, who is given the epithet 'the field measurer'. This title reflects the image of the goddess Inana bestowing the rod and ring, the one-rod reed and the coiled measuring rope, the mensuration equipment for fields, to her beloved chosen kings."

Figure 26: The "Queen of the Night Relief" with the ring and rod clearly visible (The British Museum -

http://www.britishmuseum.org/research/collection_online/collection_object_details.aspx?objectId=1355376&pa

rtId=1&searchText=Burney+Relief&page=1 [accessed 08/10/2014])

The ring and rod symbol are further referenced in Babylonian literature in the great

cosmogonic epic the *Enuma Eliš* – in which the god Marduk is given the ring and rod:

> Joyfully they hailed, "Marduk is king!"
> They bestowed in full measure sceptre, throne, and staff,
> They gave him unopposable weaponry that vanquishes enemies (Foster 1996:371-
> 372).

In this example, however, the rod is explicitly named a scepter and the items are evidence for his divine kingship. This example strengthens the argument that the ring and rod symbol represents divine authority and justice.

It is often postulated that the ring and rod are given to royalty by various divine beings (cf. the stele of Hammurabi), however, there is no evidence that corroborates this as no king is ever seen holding the device; rather it is more likely that in these iconographic sources the symbol is used to help differentiate between the divine being and the king.

Hammurabi performs a gesture of supplication through raising his right hand to his lips. Although he entered into the divine sphere and subtly attempts to liken himself to Šamaš, he still shows deference to the deity through performing this gesture. This action, and the use of the ring and rod, are perhaps the most explicit iconographic evidence in the stele to show Hammurabi's deference towards Šamaš. The gesture allows for a clear indication that while Hammurabi is an earthly king – he is in no way declaring himself to be a divine individual. There is no clear evidence in this image (nor in the textual evidence) that Hammurabi considers himself divine. Quite the opposite in fact, the iconographic evidence that is linked to Hammurabi from this source emphasises his humanity, and his deference towards the gods – he is smaller (albeit only slightly) than the deity, the skull cap he wears is typical of human kings from approximately 2100 – 1700 BCE (Roaf 2004:120), and the gesture shows that he worships the deity.

4.2.2.   The Lu-Nanna Votive Portrait[23]

RH2; Louvre Museum AO 15704, Near Eastern Antiquities, Richelieu Wing, Room 3

Object: Copper and gold statue, 19.6cm (h). Dates to First Babylonian Dynasty, 1792-1750 BCE.

Figure 27: Lu-Nanna votive portrait, front view (Musée du Louvre -

http://cartelen.louvre.fr/cartelen/visite?srv=car_not_frame&idNotice=24725&langue=fr [accessed 08/10/2014])

---

[23] One should be aware that while the votive portrait of Lu-Nanna portrays both Micro and Macro gestures, this chapter of this thesis will focus almost solely on the micro aspect. However, it is necessary to discuss the macro gesture otherwise the ideology would examined would not be coherent.

Figure 28: Lu-Nanna votive portrait, profile view (Musée du Louvre -

http://cartelen.louvre.fr/cartelen/visite?srv=car_not_frame&idNotice=24725&langue=fr [accessed 08/10/2014]))

Figure 29: Lu-Nanna votive portrait (stand detail) (Musée du Louvre -

http://cartelen.louvre.fr/cartelen/visite?srv=car_not_frame&idNotice=24725&langue=fr [accessed 08/10/2014])

Figure 30: Lu-Nanna votive portrait (facial detail) (Musée du Louvre -

http://cartelen.louvre.fr/cartelen/visite?srv=car_not_frame&idNotice=24725&langue=fr [accessed 08/10/2014])

Description: The beautifully carved statuette is an exemplary example of a Babylonian votive portrait – measuring only 19.6 cm in height, the statue is made from copper and the hands and face are decorated with gold, immediately drawing the reader's attention to these areas. The statue portrays a male figure kneeling on his right knee, his left arm is bent at a ninety-degree angle and is situated just below his chest and his right hand is raised to his face – with his forefinger and thumb pinched together.

The figure wears a simple woollen cap – which slightly resembles the cap that Hammurabi wears on his stele (cf figure 23 above) and his short beard is represented by curls in a grid, which melds between the copper and gold (Bahrani 2009:160).

The base, upon which the figure kneels upon, is also made of copper and in the front (cf. figure 29) there is a small bowl for incense. The detail in figure 29 shows a deity sitting upon a throne. This male figure wears a multi-tiered gown and has a large beard. Facing the enthroned figure is a worshipper who is a mirror image of the statue itself – kneeling in the same pose and performing the same gesture, i.e. the hand raised to the mouth and the forefinger and thumb pinched together (Bahrani 2009:160).

Identification: The inscription allows us to identify the various figures – on the base we have a seated deity who can be identified as Martu/Amurru[24]. Although two of Martu's defining iconographical characterisations, a crooked stick (*gamlu*) and a mountain (Beaulieu 2005:35-38 & Black & Green 1994:130), cannot be seen in this image it is unlikely that the statue would praise a specific deity and then include a different deity as an iconographical representation.

As the two other male figures, the one on the base and the one which forms the actual statue, are (virtually) identical images, one can attempt to elucidate who they represent at the same time. Unfortunately there is no specific indication as to who they are meant to represent. It could be Hammurabi or it could be Lu-Nanna, the man who commissioned the statue. However, due the fact that the purpose of a votive statue was to be "a place in which the essence of the represented person was manifest" and that it could become a double for the

---

[24] Beaulieu notes that "the god Amurru was a Mesopotamian construct, a god born of the necessity to find a symbolic place for the Amorites in the pantheon of Sumer and Akkad at the time of their invasion of Mesopotamia and their eventual assumption of political power" (2005:35).

person – ensuring that the person constantly worshipped the deity (Bahrani 2009:162) - it seems likely that the statue represented Lu-Nanna.

Inscription: On the base of the votive statue, behind the seated deity, there is an inscription which states the purpose of the statue: "For Martu, his god: for the life of Ḫammu-rāpī, king of Babylon, Lu-Nanna, [the …], son of Sīn-lē'i (?), fashioned [fo]r hi[s li]fe (?) a suppliant statue of copper, its face plated with gold, (and) dedicated (it) to him as his servant" (Sollberger 1969:92).

Ideological Description: The ideological meaning of the statue is explained succinctly by the inscription which is present – it is a votive statue dedicated to Martu/Amurru for the life of King Hammurabi. The iconographical motifs reinforce this message through the various elements present on the statue – the most obvious ideological motif is the nonverbal action of kneeling, this action emphasises the votive/religious nature of the statue by clearly portraying the figure as a worshipper.

The worship motif is further emphasised by the two figures on the base of the statue. The kneeling figure mirrors the statue and is worshipping the deity Martu – which is most likely a representation of the purpose of the statue.

The gold leaf on the statue, while also contributing to the aesthetics of it, ensures that the reader's eye is draw to the face and hands. The gesture that is being performed by the statue is then highlighted by the artist for a specific reason. The gesture being performed is rather

unique – it is clear that it is meant as some type of worship gesture but it is unclear exactly why the forefinger and thumb are pressed together. It is clear though that the gesture was significant due to the fact that it is highlighted and forms such a prominent part of the statue itself.

4.3.   SUMMARY OF MICRO GESTURE FORMS

The micro gesture forms examined in this chapter are subtle forms of ideological manipulation that contribute in a minor manner to the artwork in which they are present. The examples show that gestures are used to enhance the inherent ideological motifs that are present within the images and in this manner are significant in the propagation of royal ideology.

Micro gesture forms do not involve a large amount of body movement and are thus actual hand gestures rather than full nonverbal communication, which makes use of the whole body in its designs. These micro gestures are minor iconographical indications that subtly enhance the image being studied – making it less static and far more dynamic. As the forms develop over time the gestures become more vivid and lifelike.

The macro gesture forms studied in the next chapter are far more dynamic and are true examples of nonverbal communication as they involve whole body movement rather than minor hand placements and movements.

CHAPTER FIVE

5.   THE ICONOGRAPHY OF MACRO-GESTURE FORMS

The macro gesture forms attested to in this chapter are not, by some scholars, solely termed as gesture but rather as nonverbal communication devices[25]. This is due to the fact that they do not only use hand movement as a communication device but rather make use of the *entire* body to convey the message. They are therefore termed macro, not due to the message that they portray, but due to the large body movement that is usually associated with these types of gestures.

5.1.   *ICONOGRAPHIC TYPE – KNEELING*

A kneeling posture in ancient Near Eastern iconography, much as today, denotes subservience. However, this subservience can have a large amount of connotations dependant on who is kneeling and in what context this occurs. This chapter therefore explores the connotations present in the images in order to ascertain the inherent meaning behind the kneeling gesture.

5.1.1.   *Foundation Figure of a Kneeling God*

KN1; British Museum BM 102613; ancient Tello; Room 56: Mesopotamia

Object: Bronze foundation peg; 14.280cm (h). Dates to Second Dynasty of Lagaš, 2100-2000 BCE.

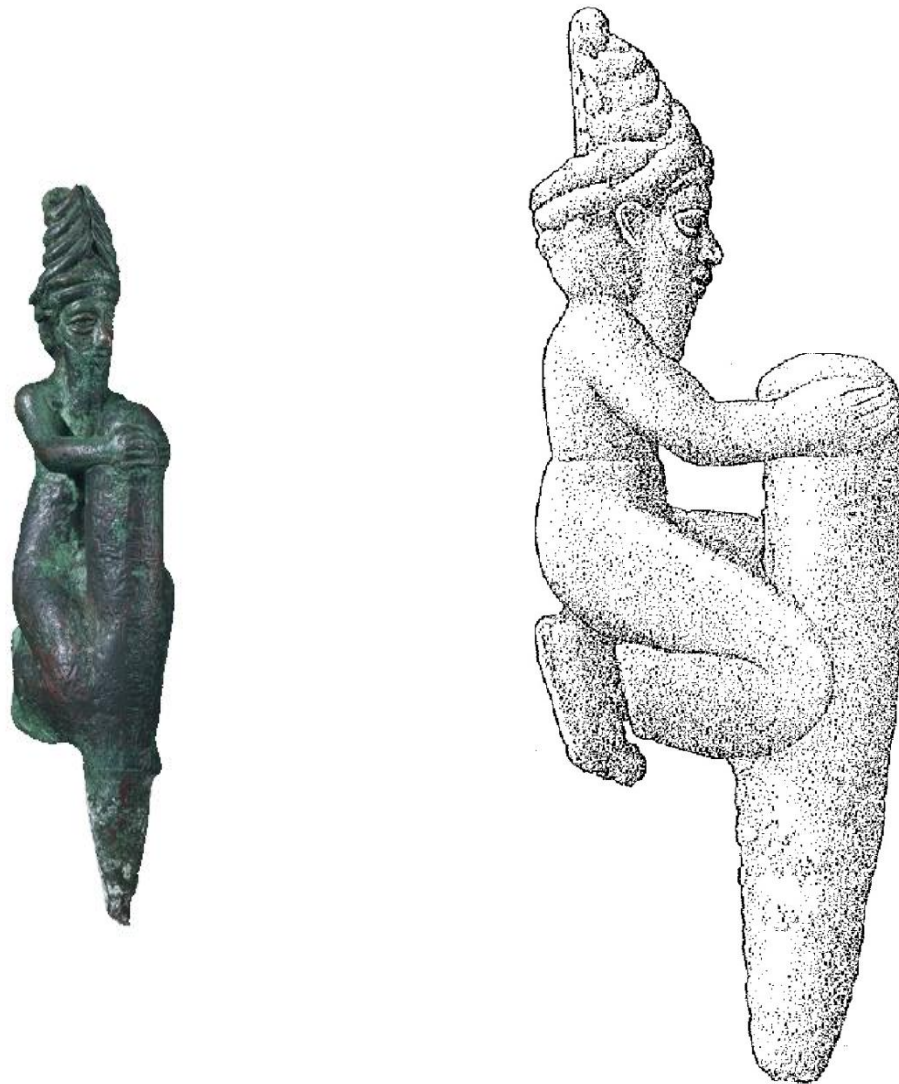[25] For the sake of continuity, in this study they will be referred to as gestures.

Figure 31: Kneeling god bronze foundation peg (British Museum -

http://www.britishmuseum.org/research/collection_online/collection_object_details.aspx?objectId=368810&part

Id=1&searchText=102613&page=1 [accessed 08/10/2014])

Figure 32: Gudea foundation peg figurine (Suter 2000:53)

Description: A bronze figurine of a masculine deity grasping the top of a foundation peg with his hands[26]. The figure is kneeling and his knees are visible on the sides of the peg. Suter (2000:61) indicates that the figure is in fact half kneeling and if there is any resemblance between this figure and that on the pedestal of Puzur-Inšušinak (cf. figure 33, below) then he is most likely dressed in a short skirt which unfortunately cannot be seen in figure 31 above. Figure 32, however, seems to show the figure wearing a long skirt, indicated by the line at the waist and ankles. The fingers in the above image, figure 32, are clearly visible as well as some muscle definition in the figure's upper arms. The figure's hair is worn in a chignon and he can be identified as a deity by the large horned crown on his head.

---

[26] Cf. the Louvre AO 311 for another example.

Figure 33: Pedestal of Puzur-Inšušinak – the workman's skirt and the half kneeling pose are clear in this

representation (Harper, Aruz, & Tallon 1992:88)

Identification: There are no clear iconographic indicators on the foundation peg that the figure

represents a specific deity – the inscription, however, allows one to infer that it is most likely

the god Ningirsu.

Inscription:

1) ^{d}*nin-gir~su*

2) *ur-sag-kal-ga-*

3) *den-líl-1á*

4) *lugal-a-ni*

5) *gù-dé-a*

6) *énsi-*

7) *1agaš.KI-ke₄*

8) *é-ninnu-AN.IM. MI. MUŠEN-bar₆-bar₆-ra-ni*

9) *mu-na-dù*

1-4)   For Ningirsu, Enlil's mighty warrior, his master

5-7)   Gudea, ruler of Lagaš

8-rev. 3)   he built and restored for him his Eninnu (Edzard 1997:140)

Ideological Description: Unlike some of the earlier representations studied, there is no immediate ideological motif that the reader is able to draw attention to. One must rather delve deeper into the underlying motifs which hint at the ideology.

Buried in the foundations of temples, the foundation figures were used to commemorate the temple builder (i.e. the king) for the succeeding generations (Suter 2010:320). Since, however, the foundations pegs were buried it is unlikely that the succeeding generations ever saw them. Hence it is more likely that by using a god as the figure who is seen to be kneeling it sends a strong ideological message that the king is blessed by the gods and they support his building of the temple.

92

The use of the god on the foundation figure also brings symbolic protection to the building itself. Not only is the god blessing the building but he is part of the very foundations of the building.

The portrayal of the god as a figure that is kneeling is an interesting manner of representing the deity – it is possible that this was simply artistic convention. However, it is likely that it did portray an ideological message of sorts. It possibly represents the deity being thankful that the building was being erected in his honour.

5.1.2.   *Middle Assyrian Seal Impression*

KN2; Baghdad Museum,

Object: Cylinder seal; 8cm (h) × 2.9 cm (d). Dates to Middle Assyrian Period, 1500 – 1000 BCE.
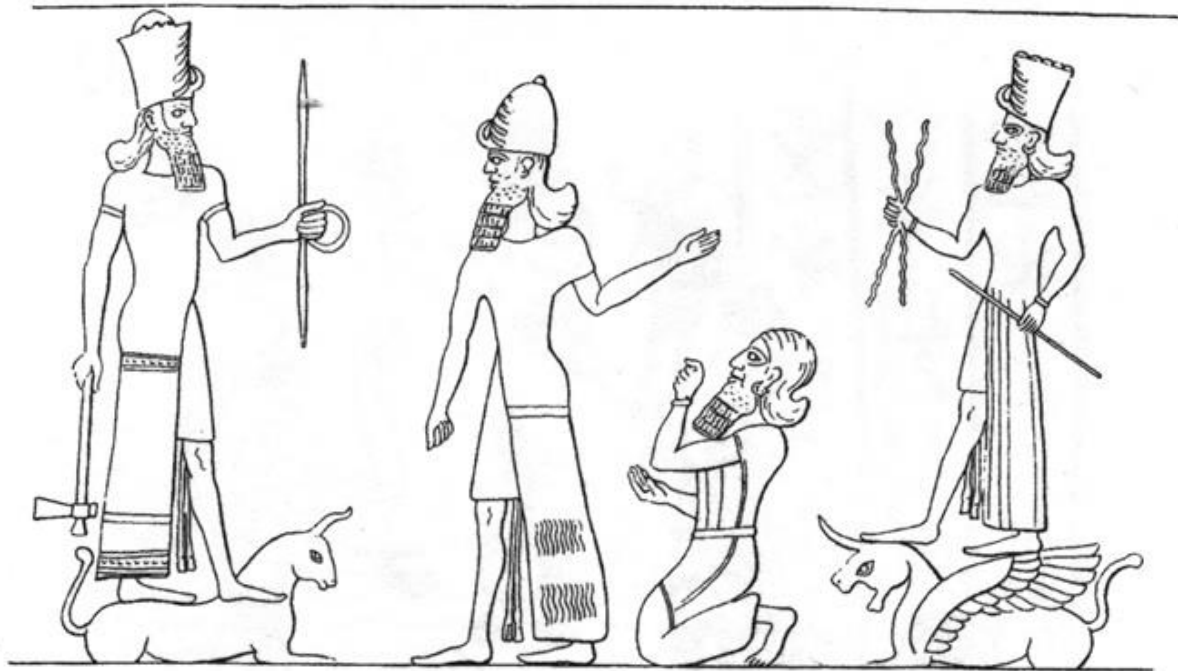
Figure 34: Esarhaddon vassal treaty cylinder seal reconstruction (Wiseman 1958:21)

Description: On the right a male figure stands astride a lion-dragon (Ornan 2005:34). However, Wiseman argues that the figure stands astride a winged bull (Wiseman 1958:19)[27]. The male figure stands with one foot forward, placing it outside his garment and carries in his right hand forked lightning. This, together with the horned headdress, indicates that the figure represented is a god.

---

[27] Renate van Dijk, an expert on bull iconography in the ancient Near East, cf. van Dijk 2011, in personal correspondence with the author, comes to the conclusion that while one might think it is a bull, the open mouth suggests that it is in fact a lion. This is further substantiated by Black & Green (2004:119) who state that in literary sources – the lion is often a metaphor for a warlike king or a fierce deity. Bonatz (2005:77) goes further in his discussion concerning this animal and the deity standing on it expressing that "Ninurta dürfte es sich im Bild des Gottes handeln, der im Laufschritt auf einem gehörnten Löwendrachen mit Skorpionschwantz steht und mit Pfeil und Bogen auf einen geflügelten Drachen (Anzū) zeilt." Not specific for this representation but in his study regarding the storm-god of the ancient Near East, Green (2003:17) states that the lion moves from being "the most powerful and fearless of beasts among struggling animals, to either a lethal adversary or a courageous guardian of human or mythological beings, finally becoming the principal attendant and associate of Ningirsu the Storm-god".

On the left of the impression stands another male figure, also a god (see the horned headdress) who stands astride a crouching bull. He too stands with one leg forward, placing it outside the garment and slightly behind this leg hang the tassels of said garment. The figure, in his right hand, holds a long-handled axe – which is seen in a resting position. In his left hand he grasps the ring and rod symbol (cf. chapter 4.2.1 above) – likely denoting him as the chief deity in the scene.

In the middle of the impression, another male deity (see the horned headdress), introduces a bareheaded male who is portrayed in a kneeling/suppliant position. His back is arched so that his head looks up towards the god and his right arm is seen supporting the left which is raised before his face in a gesture of obeisance or worship (cf. chapter 4.1 above).

Figure 35: The seal impression in location on the Vassal Treaty of Esarhaddon (Wiseman 1958:pl. III)

Figure 36: The seal impression in location on the Vassal Treaty of Esarhaddon (detail) (Wiseman 1958:pl. IV)

Identification: Due to the inscription being almost completely illegible it is difficult to ascertain exactly who the figures are meant to represent. However, it is likely that the god depicted holding the ring and rod was the chief deity of the Assyrian pantheon, namely Ashur. This view is supported by the inscription which seems to be a dedicatory inscription to the state god (Wiseman 1958:19).

Wiseman (1958:19) comes to the conclusion that the deity on the right hand side of the impression, holding the forked lightning, is most likely Adad. This seems a likely interpretation due to the fact that Adad was the storm god and the iconographic symbolism associated with the deity was forked lightning being held in one hand. However, in a newer study of the seal impression, Ornan (2005:34) states that the god being depicted is most likely

Ninurta, the Assyrian god of war – with whom the iconographic symbol of the forked lightning bolt is also associated.

The other deity has no defining characteristics and thus cannot be identified any further than to say that he is a male deity. However, the male figure that he seems to be introducing to Ashur has multiple interpretations and this has caused dating problems with the seal impression.

Wiseman (1958:20) states that the "general freedom of style and especially details of the head-gear, hair style, dress and the crouching animals all point to this same date (*c*. twelfth century B.C.) for this seal." He identifies the kneeling figure as Tukulti-Ninurta I due to the fact that he resembles Tukulti-Ninurta I on a number of vases, cylinder seals from the Middle Assyrian period, and a bas-relief on an altar in Assur (Wiseman 1958:19-20). The posture of Tukulti-Ninutrta on the altar (cf. Figure 37) and the posture of the figure on the impression are very similar, if not exactly alike, and this possibly lends credence to Wiseman's theory. Ornan, however, disagrees with this simplified manner of dating and states quite emphatically that "impression C cannot definitely be attributed to Tukulti-Ninurta I: with the same degree of certitude it can be ascribed to the late twelfth century or later" (2003:71). She notes that while the posture of the figure might well recall Tukulti-Ninurta I, it also recalls a posture on seals from the reign of Tiglath-Pileser I. Matthews notes that this form of linear engraving was uncommon before the eleventh century BCE and this likely suggests a later date for this seal. He goes on to note that this seal can be seen as one that connects "late Middle Assyrian and Neo-Assyrian glyptics, reaffirming the notion that late-second-millennium features in

Assyria formed the roots of Neo-Assyrian glyptics in general, and that of Neo-Assyrian devotional scenes in particular" (1990:90, 106, 110-113).

Figure 37: Bas-relief on the Tukulti-Ninurta I altar (Harper, Kengel-Brand, Aruz & Benzel 1995:pl 14, no. 75).

Given the fact that Ornan, a respected and knowledgeable art historian, seems to agree with Matthews in dating the seal to a later point in the Middle Assyrian era, it is likely that this seal does in fact date to the Middle Assyrian period, possibly to the reign of Tiglath-Pileser I (ca. 1114 – 1076 BCE). Therefore, if one accepts this as the date of the seal, there are two possible interpretations as to who the kneeling figure represents – it can represent Tiglath-Pileser I, or it can represent Tukulti-Ninurta I. If, however, one accepts that it represents Tukulti-Ninurta I, then this likely represents the ideological technique of legitimization of one's rule through the use of the past.

Ideological Description: Unlike the kneeling figure pictured on the foundation peg, the ideology in this image is quite clear – the ring and rod, introduction to Ashur, and the bowing or supplication.

The ring and rod, discussed in chapter four, will be touched on very lightly and only in its context within this representation. Unlike many of the representations in which this symbol is prevalent, there is no direct action between the deity holding the ring and rod and the subject of the representation, i.e. the royal figure in the centre. Many of the representations depicting the use of the ring and rod portray the subject and the deity in close proximity to one another and the deity is either in the process of bestowing the ring and rod to the king, as a sign of divine legitimization of the kings rule, or holding the ring and rod to signify their symbolic dominance in the scene (cf. Black and Green 1994: no. 73 and Figure 26). In the seal representation, the supreme deity, Ashur, holds the ring and rod – therefore likely showing his dominance as chief deity in the scene.

The introduction to Ashur provides further legitimization to the king portrayed in the scene. His introduction to the king subtly influences the reader to believe that the king knows the deity and that the deity is in full support of the king's reign. The effect of having the king surrounded by all the various deities also points to the king's piety.

The gesture that the king makes with his left hand is rather interesting – his arm is raised and placed before his face with the hand facing outwards. His index finger is then pointing

outwards towards the chief deity, Ashur. This gesture is one that shows respect or reverence to the person to whom it is aimed.

The kneeling gesture here then plays much the same role as the 'pointing the finger' gesture – it shows submission or reverence towards the deity to whom it is aimed. This gesture, however, seems to state the ideological message far more emphatically for the modern reader.

5.2.   ICONOGRAPHIC TYPE – TRAMPLING

5.2.1.   The Victory Stele of Eannatum of Lagaš or "Stele of the vultures"

TF1; Louvre Museum AO 16109, 50, 2346, and 2348, Near Eastern Antiquities, Richelieu Wing, Room 1a, Tello (ancient Girsu), E. de Sarzac, 1881.

Object: Limestone, 1.8m (h) × 1.3m (w) × 11cm (Thickness). Dates to the Early Dynastic Period II, c. 2450 BCE.

Figure 38: Victory Stele of Eannatum, Obverse (Museé du Louvre -

http://cartelen.louvre.fr/cartelen/visite?srv=car_not_frame&idNotice=9737&langue=en [accessed 08/10/2014])
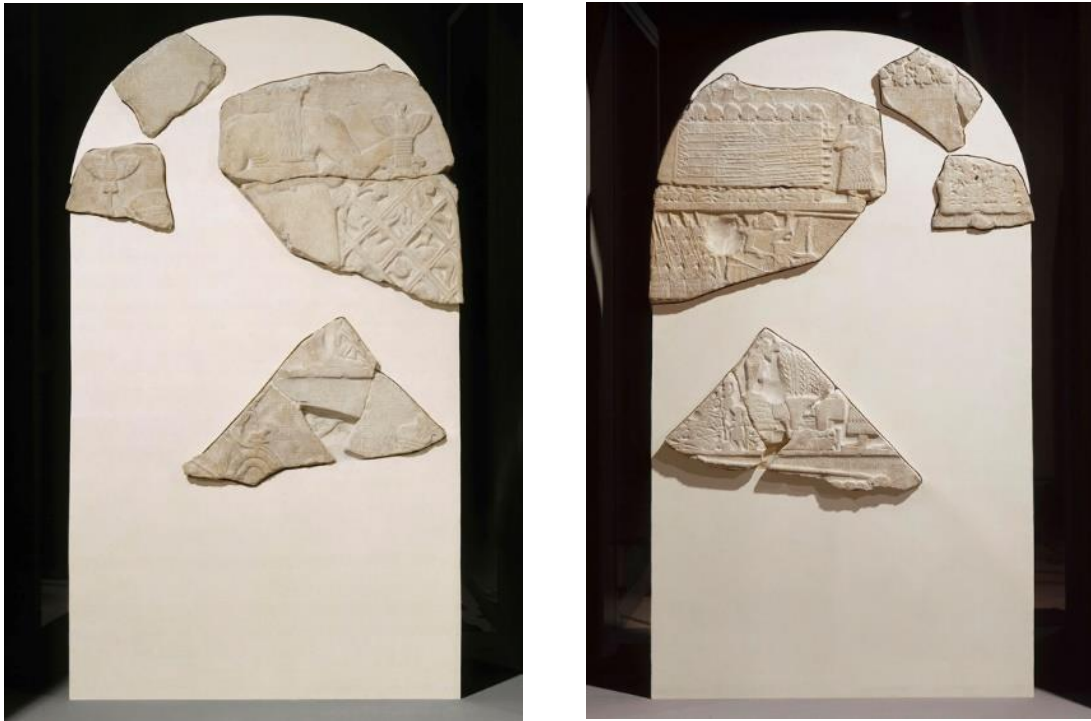
Figure 39: Victory Stele of Eannatum, Reverse (Museé du Louvre -

http://cartelen.louvre.fr/cartelen/visite?srv=car_not_frame&idNotice=9737&langue=en [accessed 08/10/2014])

Figure 40: Victory Stele of Eannatum (detail) (Museé du Louvre -

http://cartelen.louvre.fr/cartelen/visite?srv=car_not_frame&idNotice=9737&langue=en [accessed 08/10/2014])

Figure 41: Victory Stele of Eannatum (detail) (Museé du Louvre -

http://cartelen.louvre.fr/cartelen/visite?srv=car_not_frame&idNotice=9737&langue=en [accessed 08/10/2014])

Description (cf. Figures 36-37): An impressive monument, the Victory Stele of Eannatum (henceforth the Stele of the Vultures) could have an entire chapter dedicated to its iconographical study. However, the limitations of this study require a less in-depth examination and thus we shall focus our description on the details of the reverse of the stele in which the trampling of enemy soldiers is clear. Before this can be done, however, one must provide a brief description of the work as a whole.

102

Standing at 1.8m in height, this impressive limestone stele depicts the victory of the city state of Lagaš over that of Umma[28]. The highly fragmented nature of the stele makes it difficult to provide a full description of the stele. However, the fragments that remain available for study allow us to discern some information regarding the narrative being portrayed and the ideology that is present.

The stele is covered with a carving over the majority of both faces and which wrap around the sides – what negative space there is, is covered in an inscription that also wraps around both sides of the stele (Winter 2010a:7).

The obverse side of the stele (cf. Figure 42), containing two registers, is divided unequally between both with the upper register being twice the height of the lower register. The central figure, a large male with a beard and a chignon, holds a mace in his right hand and seems to be in the process of attacking a male figure who is protruding from a net on the left hand side of the central figure. The net itself contains multiple nude captives, who are all densely packed within. The central figure grasps with his left hand, a frontal lion-headed eagle with its wings outstretched and grasping in its talons, two lions (Winter 2010a:8). Behind and to the right of the main figure stands a smaller figure. Wearing a horned headdress, marking this figure as a deity, she is seen with three maces extending from either of her shoulders and behind her the same lion-headed eagle symbol repeats. The obverse side of the stele then seems to show the victory of Lagash over Umma, the culmination of the narrative.

---

[28] This battle arose out of long standing disputes concerning land and water rights. This is evident from the inscription (cf. Thureau-Dangin 1909:42-63, Jacobsen 1976:247-259, Steible & Behrens 1982:120-145, and most recently Frayne 2008:128-140) and the dispute is in fact attested to throughout the ED III period in multiple inscriptions (Winter 2010c:53).

On the lower register of the obverse the male figure is portrayed in a chariot being pulled by a mythical creature, most likely lion dragons (cf. Figure 43 below), towards the battle portrayed in the upper register (Alster 2003/2004:1).

The reverse of the stele (cf. Figure 42), divided into four registers of almost equal size, portrays the narrative of the battle to the reader. In the upper most register, vultures are depicted holding the severed heads of the defeated in their beaks. Winter notes that the "birds of prey fly above horizontal bands of inscription, so that the upper part of the stele seems separate from and subsequent to the rest of the action in the upper register" (2010a:11).

The main action takes place below the vultures – twelve soldiers are positioned from the left to the centre of the upper register and are depicted trampling the bodies of their enemies – their spears are pointed away from their bodies in an attack position. The soldiers march behind a larger male figure who is right-facing and wrapped in a garment. What occurs in front of the king is now lost.

The second register depicts the march of another group of soldiers. However, they are not marching in a battle formation. Rather their spears and battle axes are raised upwards. The soldiers here follow the king who is depicted riding in a war chariot, being drawn by donkeys. He is holding a spear in his left hand above his head, most likely striking an enemy (Alster 2003/2004:3). However, whatever the king is riding towards has not survived. Winter notes that what is left of the chariot significantly differs from the one on the obverse, thus ensuring

that there is a clear differentiation between both sides. She goes on to state that this "provides further support for the argument that it is indeed the god's vehicle on the front" (2010a:12).

The action of the narrative seems to change direction in the third register and should now be read from right to left. The central male figure is barely visible and his feet can be seen facing towards the left. It seems likely that this figure was seated and before him a bull lies on its back, clear indications of a sacrificial scene (Alster 2003/2004:3). Positioned directly above the bull is a stack of small animal bodies – and a nude priest watering sacred plants – typical of a libation scene. Left of the bull are stacks of naked male bodies and next to this, construction workers with filled baskets climb over the bodies.
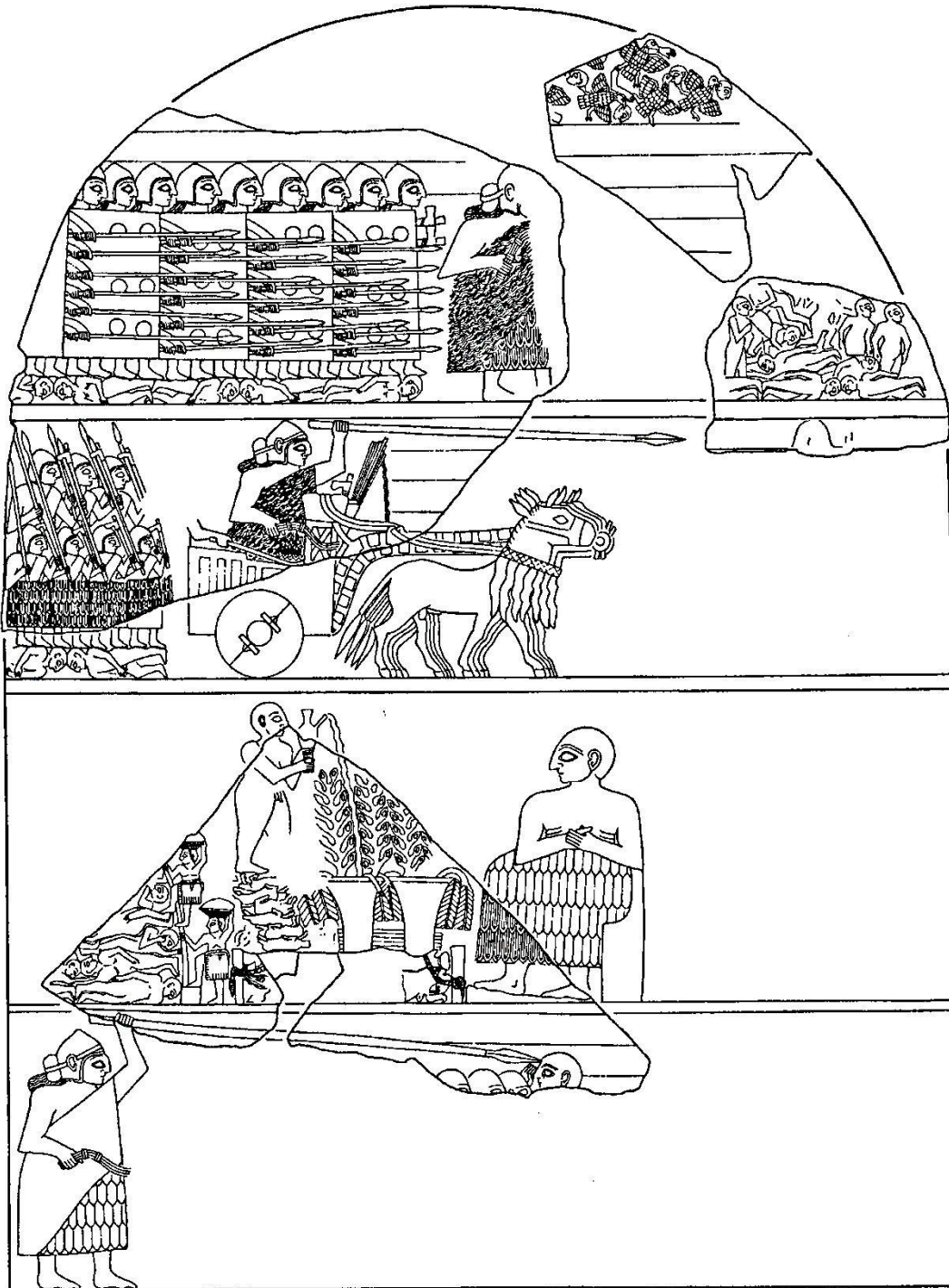
Figure 42: Reverse of the Victory Stele of Eannatum (reconstructed line drawing) (Winter 2010b:141).
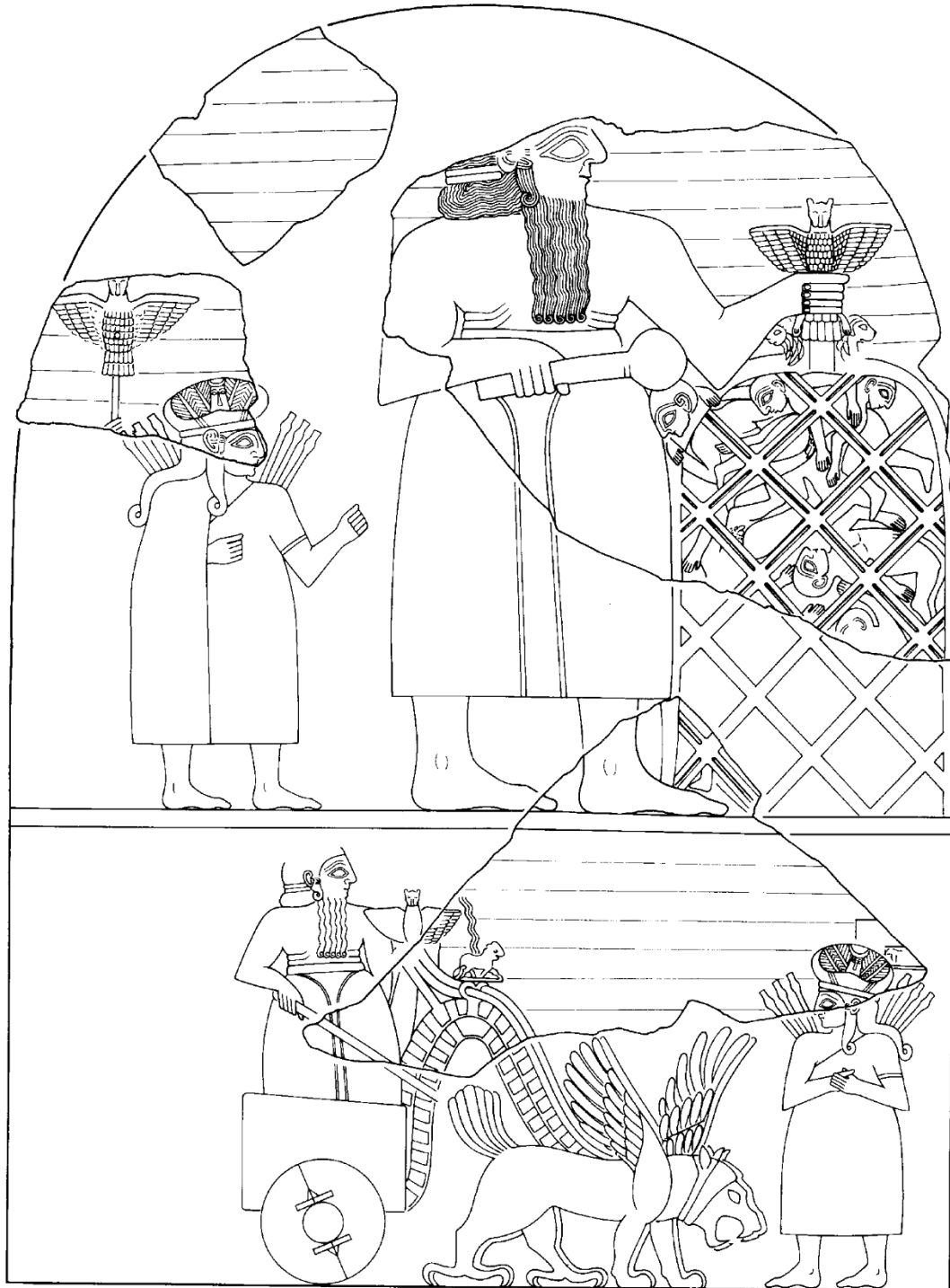
Figure 43: Obverse of the Victory Stele of Eannatum (reconstructed line drawing) (Winter 2010a:42

Identification: The sacrificial animals, libation scene and the mound of bodies call into question the identity of the central male figure on the reverse. Moortgat (1969:43) states this

107

this is most likely Eannatum, who is attending a ritual ceremony. Winter (2010a:13) agrees with this sentiment and gives evidence to support it by examining the skirt that the figure wears – stating that it appears to be the same one that is worn by Eannatum on the rest of this side of the stele, where he is clearly labelled. It is also similar to skirts that other rulers of Lagash have been portrayed wearing, cf. figure 14 above. The animals pulling the chariot, most likely donkeys, also indicate that this figure is Eannatum, rather than the god Ningirsu (Alster 2003/2004:1).

If we accept that the figure on the reverse is Eannatum, for whom the stele is named, then it calls into question who the figure on the obverse is. The *Anzu* symbol plays a large role in our discussion of the identity of the central figure on the obverse. This symbol is recorded on many royal monuments; however no royal figure is ever seen grasping the symbol – this then suggests that the figure is actually a deity. This suggestion is further corroborated by the smaller figure standing behind the central figure – the divine attributes "allow us to identify this figure as a divine personage, specifically the goddess Ninhursag, […] the mother of Ningirsu, [she also] played a principle role in the myth of the capture of the *anzu*, by giving her son essential strategic advice" (Winter 2010a:9). The mythical lion dragons, with the addition of this figure standing next to the central figure and the multitude of *Anzu* symbols, which were closely associated with Ningirsu (Leick 2003:9), that adorn this monument it seems likely that the central figure then represents Ningirsu.

Inscription: The inscription on the Stele of the Vultures is incredibly large and it is not necessary to examine it in its entirety – therefore certain parts of the inscription will be left out.

"Eanatum, who has strength, declares, "Now then, O enemy!" For Eanatum, the name which Inana gave him, Eana-Inana-Ibgalakakatum, was [given] him as a name [(2 frag. cases)]. Eanatum, who has strength, ordained by Ningirsu, Eanatum, [who declard] "Now then, O enemy!", proclaimed for evermore: "The ruler of Umma – where is he recruiting? With (other) men […] he is able to exploit the Gu'edena, the beloved field of Ningirsu. May he (Ningirsu) strike him down!"

Eanatum gave the great battle net of Enlil to the leader of Umma, and made him swear to him by it. The leader of Umma swore to Eanatum: "By the life of Enlil, king of heaven and earth! I may exploit the field of Ningirsu as a(n interest-bearing) loan. I shall not… the irrigation channel! F[orever and evermore, I shall not transgress the territory of Ningirsu."

Eanatum, king of Lagash, granted strength by Enlil, nourished with special milk by Ninhursag, given a fine name by Inana, granted wisdom by Enki, chosen in her heart by Nanshe, the mighty queen, who subj[ugates foreign lands for] N[ingirsu], beloved of [Dumuzi'abzu], nominated by Nendursaga, beloved friend of Lugalurub, beloved spouse of Inan; [defeate]d Elam and Subartu, mountainous lands of timber and [treasure,] [(x cases broken) he] de[feated…], defeated Susa, [defeated] the ruler of Urua, who stood with the

(city's) emblem in the vanguard, [(x cases broken) he des]troyed…], and destroyed Arua….
Sumer [x cases broken]. He defeated U[r (14 cases broken)" (Cooper 1986:45-7).

Ideological Description: The most pertinent ideological message is perhaps portrayed by the size of this monument − at 1.8 metres it is a striking monument to the victory achieved by Eannatum. The size of Ningirsu portrays him as the central figure on the monument. His attack and capture on the enemy forces within the net portrays a complete victory by the forces of Lagaš.

On the reverse of the stele the forces of Lagaš, seen marching into battle and taking part in a battle, are portrayed in orderly lines trampling the enemy forces. The orderly line provides a duality to the scene that would have been easily understood to an ancient reader − the forces of Lagaš are ordered and bring order − while the enemy are chaotic and therefore should be brought to order. The trampling reinforces the idea of the Victory of the forces of Lagaš − the soldiers on the upper register have to march over the fallen enemies to continue attacking the other enemies. In the second register, Winter's reconstruction (figure 42) portrays the forces of Lagaš continuing to trample the enemy, while they march.

Eannatum appears on multiple registers within in the stele, often in the midst of battle or celebrating the battle. Taking into account Braun-Holzinger's (2007:46) view on this, one can posit that Eannatum attempted to portray himself as a victorious and powerful warrior, or as Braun-Holzinger states, a "Kriegsherr".

The ritual ceremony, most likely a celebration of the victory in battle, shows how Eannatum reigns supreme over his people and how he honours the dead by ensuring that they have burial mounds. It is possible that these burial mounds rather represent the enemy bodies and Eannatum is representing his total victory through the depiction of the multitudes of dead enemy soldiers that he is burying.

The trampling in the stele, then, provides an air of realism as to what the soldiers might have done to the enemy after they had defeated them. In this way it is possible that trampling is also meant as a device to portray the humiliation of the enemy. Their forces are so defeated that they cannot stop the forces of Lagash from crushing their comrades bodies.

5.2.2.   *The Victory Stele of Naram-Sin*

TF2; Louvre Museum Sb4, Near Eastern Antiquities, Richelieu Wing, Room 2, Susa, J. de Morgan Excavations, 1889.

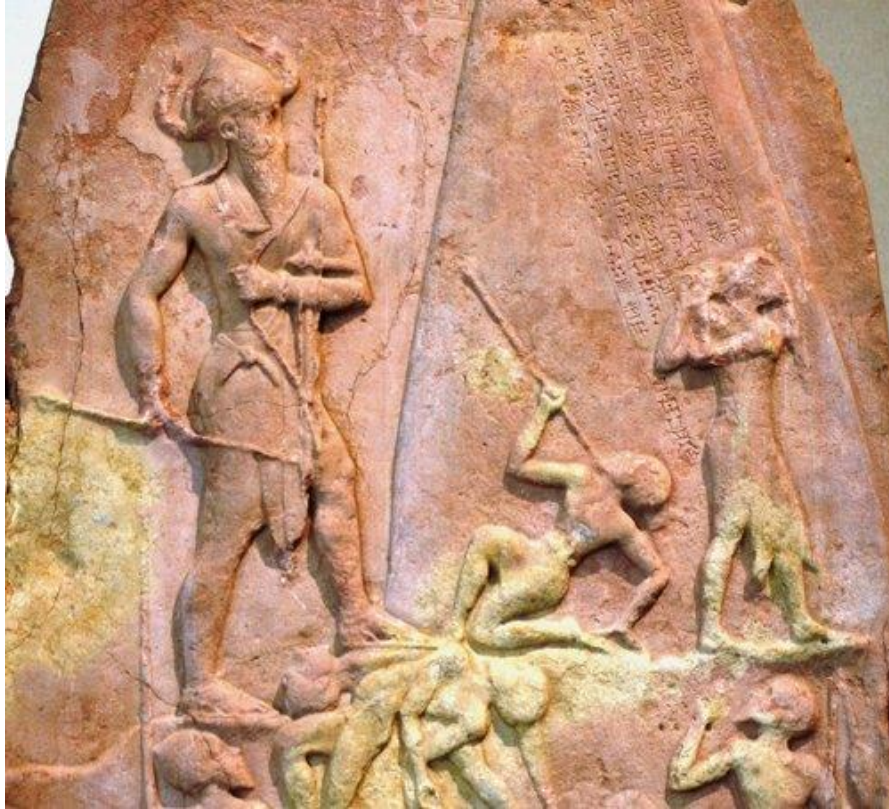*Object*: Spicular Limestone, 2m (h) × 1.5m (w). Dates to the Akkadian Period, c. 2250 BCE.

Figure 44: Victory Stele of Naram-Sin (Detail) (Museé du Louvre -

http://cartelen.louvre.fr/cartelen/visite?srv=car_not_frame&idNotice=11955&langue=en [accessed 08/10/2014])

Figure 45: Victory Stele of Naram-Sin (Museé du Louvre -

http://cartelen.louvre.fr/cartelen/visite?srv=car_not_frame&idNotice=11955&langue=en [accessed 08/10/2014])

113

Description: Beginning at the bottom left of the stele the reader sees orderly rows of soldiers holding spears and standards and advancing up the mountain towards the enemy. Above them on the top row stands a large figure holding an inwards facing bow and a sceptre. The figure wears a horned cap indicative of a deity. It is not the typical one worn by major deities (cf. Figure 3), but rather one often worn by minor deities. However, as discussed in Chapter 2.2.3, while both Oates (2003:41) and Winter (2008:76) state that this is the most likely interpretation for the single tiered horned headdress, Van Dijk (2011:133-134) comes to the conclusion that this cannot hold for all cases. The large male figure wears a battle tunic, has a full beard and holds in his right hand what appears to be a spear.

The large figure is trampling a defeated enemy soldier, who is nude – this is a common manner of depicting the defeated in Mesopotamian art and is most likely done in order to degrade the enemy (Bahrani 1993:15). The soldiers who are standing against him are clothed in miniscule loincloths which just cover their lower half, and they all seem to perform a gesture of subservience or a 'mercy' gesture – i.e. holding their hands in front of their face in a pleading manner. The smaller figures all gaze at the large male figure at the top of the stele, in what seems to be either awe or fear, while he seems to be gazing towards an inscription on the top right hand side of the stele.

At the top of the stele there are two clear astral symbols (eight pointed stars) and a possible third one. However, the third is unclear due to the damage that the stele has sustained. It is possible that there were more of these symbols on the section of the stele that is completely

broken away (see below for a reconstruction), however, this remains speculative (cf. Westenholz 2000:105 for argumentation regarding this, also cf. page 94 of this study)

The landscape in the stele is clear and sections of the mountain are delineated by clear lines and through the use of figures who are shown marching up the mountain on these various levels.

Inscription: On the stele are two inscriptions – one in Elamite and the other in Akkadian. The Akkadian reads:

> _{DINGIR}Naram-Sin, the powerful, [. . .about 10 lines missing or untranslatable.
>
> . .] in the mountains of the Lullubi assembled and a battle. . .[. . .
>
> about 15 lines missing or untranslatable. . .] dedicated to the deity . . .
>
> [about 10 lines missing]. (Feldman 2007:275)

While the Elamite reads:

> I (am) Shutruk-Nahhunte, son of Hallutush-Inshushinak, beloved servant
>
> of Inshushinak, king of Anshan (and) Susa, enlarger of my realm,
>
> protector of Elam, prince of Elam. At the command of Inshushinak, I
>
> struck down Sippar. I took the stele of Naram-Sin in my hand, and I
>
> carried it off and brought it back to Elam. I set it up in dedication to
>
> my lord, Inshushinak (Feldman 2007:275).

As the reader can determine from the inscriptions, the Akkadian one is fairly damaged and produces very little information to further our knowledge or the ideological message of the stele. What it does, however, is provide a basic historical background of the stele. One can determine that the stele was dedicated to a deity, was made to epitomize Naram-Sin and his heroic deeds and helps to provide a location for the battle and against whom it was fought.

The Elamite inscription, from a later period, provides evidence for why this sculpture was excavated so far from its place of origin. Shutruk-Nahhunte removed the statue from Sippar, after conquering the city, and took it to Elam as a dedication of his victory to Inshushinak.

This statue then represents two very distinct ideological messages, from two distinct and wholly separate political states within the Near East. This makes the stele unique in terms of the ideological message that it conveys and the one it was meant to convey.

Identification: As the name implies, the figure on the top of the stele is the Akkadian king Naram-Sin − as is evident from both the inscriptions on the stele and the iconographic representation. He is the only Akkadian king to have claimed divinity through the wearing of the horned crown and through the use of the determinative DINGIR ("god") before his name (Ornan 2013:570). [29]

---

[29] Being the first Akkadian king to claim divinity enabled Naram-Sin to maintain his authority over the various cities that were under his control (Eppihimer 2010:379).

Ideological Description: The stele, which represents a battle between Naram-Sin's forces and the Lullubi, has been extensively studied and praised for its originality and detail[30], and scholars have asserted that there are numerous features which stress royal ideology. Westenholz (2000:103) claims that four of these aspects are: 1) body language, 2) the depiction of enemies, 3) the bow as a royal weapon, and 4) astral symbols. While Winter (1997:370) discusses the aspects of vigour and manliness that are presented by Naram-Sin's figure in the representation. Westenholz' study is worth examining in detail as it succinctly examines various aspects that lead to ideological motifs.

The body language present within the representation is perhaps most obvious when examining Naram-Sin. His body stance indicates a *triumph* – his head is held high and his body is closely associated to a heroic figure. Interestingly, Westenholz states that it has been argued that this body does not represent Naram-Sin himself – but rather a stylised version of a ruler and thus is an idealised idea of how a ruler is represented (2000:103). The idealised body is aimed at representing how the king is 'a representative of his people', but at the same time 'a protective deity of the city', thus linking the divine and mundane. In this manner the representation fulfils both the roles of signifying Naram-Sin as both a deity and a king, thus being both of the divine and mundane worlds at the same time.

Westenholz, in her discussion on the body language, fails to mention the trampling that is taking place. Naram-Sin tramples one enemy specifically while his troops on the lowest register seem to trample others. This indicates the enemies complete defeat in that they are

---

[30] Cf. Amiet 1980:104; Frankfort 1954:43; Groenewegen-Frankfort 1951:163; Hansen 2003:195; Moortgat 1969:51; Parrot 1961:174.

literally being crushed by the forces of Akkad. This brings to the representation an ideological message that is very strong – the enemy cannot stand against the might of the Akkadian Empire and are literally crushed in its path. This can be interpreted in two manners; firstly for the specific battle being portrayed and secondly for the Akkadian Empire as a whole.

The enemies depicted are the complete antithesis of the Akkadian soldiers, they are depicted as being in a state of complete chaos, some naked, and literally falling over each other in their attempts to flee the oncoming onslaught of Akkadian soldiers. Westenholz (2000:103-104) states, concerning the nude and semi-nude soldiers, that while some are clothed in animal skins others are portrayed as being completely naked – the message being portrayed that the enemy is likened to an animal. Some gaze up at Naram-Sin in terror, while some plead for their lives. One is clearly shown no mercy as a spear thrust through his throat. This is not a massacre as many have portrayed it, at least not to the Akkadian mindset – rather it was bringing order to chaos. The ordered lines of the Akkadian soldiers versus the unstructured, chaotic, and sparsely clothed (if at all) enemies is successful in portraying a very clear ideological message; that being that the Akkadian victory brings order to chaos and civilization to the uncivilized (cf. page 87 of this study for a similar message portrayed on the Stele of the Vultures). The enemies are nothing more than animals and thus their slaughter is not considered something that is cruel or harsh. The entire scene culminates at the point of Naram-Sin's toes where an enemy soldier is being trampled on by the king, showing his might, and another has been stabbed in the throat by the royal.

The bow as a royal weapon (Westenholz 2000:105) is represented for the first time in this iconic stele. This is unusual as none of the other royal representations can be seen in the stele above (i.e. the mace, throne, lead-rope, crown, sceptre or crook). Though there is archaeological evidence of kings using the bow for a symbolic meaning, this is not attested to until later periods. Thus one must question the reason for the bow being used by Naram-Sin in the stele. The bow is represented in an unusual way on the stele – with the bowstring facing the enemy. Wilkinson (1991:84-6) argues that this was a representational technique used by Mesopotamian artists to represent the dominance of one party over the other.

Wilkinson (1991:83-84) states that the bow is used to represent the *power* that was inherent in a king or a god, and a backwards facing bow or turned bow was used to show that the conflict was over, that there was no resistance and that the victory was assured. In ideological terms this message has two intended receivers – the victor, whose conquest of the vanquished is so ultimate that there is no need to concern oneself with your weapon being available to the enemy. The vanquished are the secondary receivers of the ideological message, in that every time the representation is seen it re-enacts their utter submission and conquest. This convention of holding the bow turned away from the body is prevalent in the images of the Assyrian court, as Root (1979:168) notes that "this pose with the bow reflected an actual usage which may even have had some significance within court protocol." It is unlikely that this court protocol had been established during the Akkadian period and thus the bow was most likely used to symbolise, as Wilkinson suggests, the ultimate victory over one's opponent.

Above the battle one can see at least three stars. However, reconstructions state that there may have been as many as 7 pointed stars (cf. Figure 46 below). The seven stars when grouped together are most often associated with the seven planets (the sun, moon and the five planets, often referred to as the Sebetti/Heptad/Pleiades). However, these are not the only things that are associated with the seven pointed stars. Westenholz (2000:105) notes that these are also associated with seven heroic gods; consequently their appearance in this image might suggest divine assistance was given to Naram-Sin to ensure his victory. Interestingly, the astral symbols not only occur within the ideological message portrayed by the stele, but also grant the stele itself divine protection – to deface the stele is an affront to the gods themselves (Westenholz 2000:106).

The Victory Stele of Naram-Sin portrays various ideological messages that are intended to influence the readers in multiple manners. The aspects mentioned above all create the illusion of Naram-Sin's prowess in battle, his divinity, and his blessings from the gods.

5.1. SUMMARY OF MACRO GESTURE FORMS

The macro gesture forms that are portrayed in the representations above provide a strong contrast to the micro gestures studied in chapter four. These gestures make use of a far wider range of bodily movements to further communicate the ideological messages of the representations.

Furthermore, the representations studied above that make use of these macro gestures seem to make a more emphatic point with regards to their ideological messages. The messages tend to

be more obvious to the viewer and therefore most likely were intended to be more visually striking that the micro forms from chapter four.

Figure 46: Possible restoration drawing of the Victory Stele of Naram-Sin (Börker-Klähn 1982:no.26)

CHAPTER SIX

6.   SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

This study has attempted to expound upon how gestures, within ancient Mesopotamian iconographic sources, attempt to communicate royal ideological motifs. Ideology is a strong underlying factor in the iconographic materials from ancient Mesopotamia, and how this ideology is portrayed influences both the modern viewer and the ancient viewer.

The theoretical form of gestures examined in this paper are specifically aimed towards portraying an underlying message and therefore they work significantly well in depicting the royal ideological motifs that are inherent within the iconographic materials. This study has divided the gestures into two forms, namely micro and macro gestures – and within these forms, four iconographic representations have been examined in an attempt to study how the gestures communicate their intended messages.

Gestures, through the use of a physical action, send a message to a receiver. However, the receiver, through their own cultural influences, might interpret the message in a different way than was originally intended. Gombrich, when examining gesture, states that ritual and art cannot easily be separated. Furthermore, he adds, concerning the Victory Stele of Naram-Sin, that "the *transition* from action to ritual and hence into art can perhaps be followed in an age-old formula, that for triumph which shows the victorious ruler trampling […] his defeated foe" (1966:396, my emphasis). The use of ritual then provides another aspect to the examination of intended communication through gesture – was the message specific to this

122

iconographic representation or was it a generalized message that could be communicated through a variety of representations?

While many representations might make use of the same form to portray a message, the underlying factors in those messages, i.e. sender, receiver, intended receiver, message, and intended message, differ vastly from one representation to the next. One could therefore state that a ritualized form is often used; however, the intended message is quite impossible to ritualize.

The intended underlying messages are of the utmost importance as they form the basis of the majority of Mesopotamian iconographic representations – as Suter reinforces by asserting that these representations promote, constantly, the quintessential Mesopotamian ideology of the king being the sole provider of safety and religious communication between the peoples of Mesopotamia and their deities (2012:220-221).

How this message is portrayed by means of the iconographic works selected for this study (cf. Chapter Four and Five) forms the very basis of this examination. The questions that were tested were; 1) do these representations portray an underlying ideology?, 2) if so, what is this ideology?, and 3) do the gestures, be they micro or macro, contribute to the transmission of the message?

This chapter aims to provide a brief discussion of these questions and their answers with regard to the selected works of chapters four and five, following this discussion the final conclusions will be drawn.

6.1.   SUMMARY

6.1.1.   Do the Selected Representations Portray an Underlying Ideology?

The simple answer to this question is yes. The representations selected for this study all have an underlying ideological motif that influences the manner in which one would read the artefact. The ideology is most likely not an intentional, on the part of the artist, propagandistic message in many of the cases, cf. chapter 4.1.1 – the limestone relief of Ur-Nanshe, and was in fact meant simply to represent an action that the king had undertaken. The modern viewer, however, understands that the royal ideology was so permeated through society that regardless of whether it was intentional or not, it still clearly influenced the creator of the artefact.

On the other hand, an artefact such as the Victory Stele of Naram-Sin provides an excellent example of an ideological message that was very clearly intentional. The placement of the king in the centre of the monument is clearly stylized and the manner in which he is portrayed, being significantly larger than other on the representation and showing divine attributes, immediately makes this ideological message far more concentrated. Winter (2010d:85) asks her reader the following question, regarding Naram-Sin's body:

> What, the modern viewer may ask, is Naram-Sîn of Agade doing on his Victory Stela (cf. figure 44), displaying for us not only his victory in battle but his well-rounded buttocks, his muscled calves, his elegantly arched back, his luxuriant beard? […] he is […] within our cultural lexicon of value, well proportioned, lithe, fit, and simply "divine"!

This comedic quote brings to light the sexual and alluring nature of Naram-Sin's portrayal in this representation – a nature that has most likely been over-emphasized to ensure that the viewer sees Naram-Sin as a divine leader.

Therefore, whether the representation intentionally includes an ideological message or not matters little – the message is inherent nonetheless. This makes any study of Mesopotamian representations a problematic task as one is unsure as to whether the ideological message is intentional or not.

6.1.2.   *What is the Underlying Ideological Message?*

Determining the underlying ideological message is a difficult task due to the fact that the viewer must initially determine whether it is intentional or simply due to the pervasive nature of Mesopotamian ideology. Once this has been determined, then one can begin an attempt to ascertain the underlying ideological message.

6.1.2.1.   Limestone Relief of Ur-Nanše Ideology (4.1.1)

The immediate ideological motif that the relief emanates is one of the king as a builder. However, this is simply the surface and one must delve deeper into attempting to understand what lay beneath the surface ideology. In the case of the relief of Ur-Nanše the king as a builder represents the underlying messages of prosperity and promotes the idea of the king as

125

someone who wishes to please the gods. The underlying message promotes the impression that Ur-Nanše was building for the future of his people and he is therefore venerated by them – this veneration is indicated by the gesture of raised hands that is present within the relief.

6.1.2.2. Seated Statue of Gudea: The Architect with the Plan (4.1.2)

The gesture performed in this statue, i.e. one of clasped hands, gives the impression of piety that is reinforced by the inscription and the plan both present on the statue. The king, Gudea, shows his prosperity and piety through the building of the Eninnu, a large temple complex. The inscription clearly notes this statue as being linked to the building of the Eninnu. It is possible then to determine that the underlying ideology of this statue attempts to portray the king as an incredibly pious leader who praises the gods by his building a large temple complex. However, it also shows that the king was a good administrator and a prosperous ruler.

6.1.2.3. Stele of Hammurabi (4.2.1)

The stele of Hammurabi immediately provides a grandiose impression when one views it and it is not only the size of this monument that makes an immediate impression on the viewer. The underlying ideology portrays itself in a multitude of manners in the representation and it is through these that the viewer is able to understand that the underlying ideology shows Hammurabi as a law abiding and law providing king, who shows piety in his actions and subtly portrays himself as a near equal to the gods. However, the raised hand signifies that he still worships them.

6.1.2.4.   The Votive Portrait of Lu-Nanna (4.2.2)

The most striking feature of the votive portrait is the gold which is present on the figure's face and hands. This gold not only makes the portrait visually striking but ideologically as well – it signifies the prosperity of Hammurabi's reign, as well as of the benefactor who commissioned the portrait. The raised hand gesture adds to the underlying ideology by portraying a praising form – whether this is aimed towards Hammurabi or a deity is unclear. However, this praise is reinforced through the gesture.

6.1.2.5.   Foundation Figure of a Kneeling God (5.1.1)

This figure, much like the previous artefact from the reign of Gudea, emphasises the ruler's piety and temple building activities. The underlying ideological message then emphasises the prosperity of Gudea's rule and his strong religious activities. While the kneeling might simply be artistic convention it could also indicate that Gudea wished to portray himself as someone whom the gods loved or revered.

6.1.2.6.   Middle Assyrian Cylinder Seal Impression (5.1.2)

The cylinder seal impression contains two underlying ideological messages that both interact with each other to reinforce their messages. The king is being introduced to the chief deity, Ashur, hereby legitimizing his rule through the deity. The gestures that the king is making reinforce the king's reverence for the deity through both the pointing of the finger and the kneeling.

6.1.2.7.   The Victory Stele of Eannatum (5.2.1)

The enormous monument contains a variety of ideological messages. However, the gesture that was examined here, i.e. trampling, reinforces the utter victory of Eannatum's forces that are portrayed on the representation.

6.1.2.8.   The Victory Stele of Naram-Sin (5.2.2)

Much like the Victory Stele of Eannatum, the Victory Stele of Naram-Sin uses trampling to reinforce the utter victory of the soldiers of Akkad. This is also reinforced by Naram-Sin's presence on the battle field and his crushing of the enemy.

6.1.3.   Do the Gestures Contribute to the Transmission of the Message?

The gestures studied above are not meant to, themselves, transmit an ideological message but rather reinforce the already inherent message within the representation. It is possible then to suggest that gestures do contribute to the transmission of the message, albeit not in a manner that makes them the central aspect of message transmission.

6.2.   CONCLUSIONS

In conclusion, this study has focused its discussion on the inherent ideological messages that are present within ancient Mesopotamian iconographic representations. The study further focused by examining artefacts that have been dated between 3000 B.C.E to 1000 B.C.E. Furthermore, while the study examined the inherent royal ideology, it attempted to reveal what role gesture plays in the transmission of these messages.

It is clear that the representations studied above do contain inherent ideological messages that were meant to be transmitted to the citizens of those periods and that this ideology developed throughout the periods, often building on past ideology. The study has proposed that this ideology was aided in its transmission through the use of gestures.

The gestures, while not the pivotal part of ideological communication, nonetheless add realism to the representations while at the same time fulfilling a communicative function. This is further reinforced by examining the three fundamental questions that this study has examined in each representation. By answering these questions in the summary, it has enabled the study to rather take an overall examination of each of the representations individually and then use this information to answer these questions succinctly and effectively.

In answer to the hypothesis made in the introduction, this study proposes that while gestures do provide a method of communication for the inherent ideological messages in the representations, they are in no means meant to solely provide this information, but rather reinforce the message that is often already being transmitted in the depictions. These depictions then use gesture to lend a realistic air to the figures that are making use of them and to subtly influence the viewer into accepting the message that the depiction is attempting to communicate.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Alster, B. 2003/2004. Images and text on the "Stele of the Vultures". *Archiv für Orientforschung* 50: 1-10.

Althusser, L. 1971. *Lenin and philosophy and other essays.* New York: Monthly Review Press.

Amiet, P. 1980. *Art of the ancient Near East*. New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc.

André-Salvini, B. 2003. "The rediscovery of Gudea statuary in the Hellenistic period." In Aruz, J. & Wallenfels, R. (eds). 2003. *Art of the first cities; the third millennium B.C. from the Mediterranean to the Indus*. New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 424-449.

Aruz, J. & Wallenfels, R. (eds). 2003. *Art of the first cities; the third millennium B.C. from the Mediterranean to the Indus*. New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art.

Aruz, J., Benzel, K. & Evans, J.M. 2008. *Beyond Babylon: art, trade, and diplomacy in the second millennium B.C.* New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art.

Asher-Greve, J.M. 2006. The gaze of goddesses: on divinity, gender, and frontality in the Late Early Dynastic, Akkadian, and Neo-Sumerian periods. *NIN* 4: 1-59.

Asher-Greve, J.M. & Westenholz, J.G. 2013. *Goddesses in context: On divine powers, roles, relationships and gender in Mesopotamian textual and visual sources*. OBO 259. Fribourg & Göttingen: Academic Press Fribourg and Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht.

Aubet, M.E. 2013. *Commerce and colonization in the Ancient Near East.* New York: Cambridge Univeristy Press.

Bahrani, Z. 1993. The iconography of the nude in Mesopotamia. *Source: Notes in the History of Art* 12(2): 12-19.

Bahrani, Z. 2008. *Rituals of war: the body and violence in Mesopotamia*. New York: Zone Books.

Bahrani, Z. 2009. "The Babylonian visual image." In Leick, G. (ed.) *The Babylonian world*. New York: Routledge, 155-170.

Beaulieu, A.P. 2005. "The god Amurru as symbol of ethnic identity." In van Soldt, W.H., Kalvelagen, R. & Katz, D. *Ethnicity in ancient Mesopotamia: Papers read at the 48th Recontre Assyriologique Internationale Leiden, 1-4 July 2002*. Leiden: Nederlands Instituut voor het Nabije Oosten, 31-46.

Bienkowski, P. 2000. "Guti." In Bienkowski, P. & Millard, A. (eds.) *Dictionary of the ancient Near East.* London: British Museum Press, 135.

Black, J.A., & Green, A. 1994. *Gods, demons and symbols of ancient Mesopotamia: an illustrated dictionary.* London: British Museum Press.

Black, J.A., Cunningham, G., Flückiger-Hawker, E., Robson, E., & Zólyomi, G. 1998a. "A praise poem of Iddin-Dagan." *The Electronic Text Corpus of Sumerian Literature*. (http://www-etcsl.orient.ox.ac.uk/) Oxford: Oriental Institute. [accessed 12/08/2013].

Black, J.A., Cunningham, G., Flückiger-Hawker, E., Robson, E., & Zólyomi, G. 1998b. "Inana's descent to the nether world." *The Electronic Text Corpus of Sumerian Literature*. (http://www-etcsl.orient.ox.ac.uk/) Oxford: Oriental Institute. [accessed 08/11/2013].

Black, J.A., Cunningham, G., Flückiger-Hawker, E., Robson, E., & Zólyomi, G. 1998c. "A praise poem of Šulgi (Šulgi A)." *The Electronic Text Corpus of Sumerian Literature*. (http://www-etcsl.orient.ox.ac.uk/) Oxford: Oriental Institute. [accessed 24/09/2014]

Bonatz, D. 2005. "Ninurtas Gaben. Assyrische Kriegsideologie und ihre Bilder." In Meißner, B., Schmidt, O. & Sommer, M. (eds.) *Krieg – Gesellschaft – Institutionen. Beiträge zu einer vergleichenden Kriegsgeschichte*. Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 62-84.

Börker-Klähn, J. 1982. *Altvorderasiatische Bildstelen und vergleichbare Felsreliefs I-II*. Mainz: P von Zabern.

Braun-Holzinger, E.A. 2007. *Das Herrscherbild in Mesopotamien und Elam: Spätes 4. bis frühes 2. Jt. v. Chr*. Münster: Ugarit-Verlag.

Brisch, N. 2006. The priestess and the king: the divine kingship of Šū-Sîn of Ur. *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 126(2): 161-176.

Brisch, N. 2013. Of gods and kings: divine kingship in ancient Mesopotamia. *Religion Compass* 7(2): 37-46.

Brumfiel, E.M., & Earle, T.K. 1996. "Specialization, exchange, and complex societies: an introduction". In Brumfiel, E.M., & Earle, T.K. (Eds.) *Specialization, exchange, and complex societies.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1-9.

Cabrera Pertusatti, R. & Van Dijk, R.M. Forthcoming. "igi mu-un-ši-in-bar igi-uš$_2$-a-ka: el «ser-en/para-el-cuerpo» dionisíaco de Inanna y el «ser-en/para-el-cuerpo» apolíneo de Dumuzi". In Cabrera Pertusatti, R. & Nunez Bascunan, R. (eds.): *Tiempo, espacio y existencia en las sociedades del Cercano Oriente Antiguo*. Buenos Aires: Editorial de la Facultad de Filosofía y Letras-Universidad de Buenos Aires.

Chavalas, M.W. 2006. *The ancient Near East: historical sources in translation.* Malden: Blackwell Publishing

Choksy, J.K. 2002. "In reverence for deities and submission to kings: A few gestures in ancient near eastern societies". *Iranica Antiqua* 37: 7-29.

Cifarelli, M. 1998. Gesture and alterity in the art of Ashurnasirpal II of Assyria. *The Art Bulletin* 80(2): 210-228.

Cole, S.W. 1996. *Nippur in late Assyrian times c. 755-612 BC.* State Archives of Assyria Studies, Volume IV. Helsinki: The Neo-Assyrian Text Corpus Project.

Collon, D. 1986. *Catalogue of Western Asiatic Seals in the British Museum: cylinder seals III, Isin Larsa and Old Babylonian periods*. London: British Museum.

Collon, D. 2007. "Iconographic evidence for some Mesopotamian cult statues". In Groneberg, B., & Spieckermann, H. (eds.) *Die Welt der Götterbilder.* Berlin: de Gruyter, 57-84.

Cooper, J.S. 1986. *Sumerian and Akkadian Royal Inscriptions: Presargonic Inscriptions*. Yale: American Oriental Society.

Cooper, J.S. 1989. *Reconstructing history from ancient inscriptions: the Lagash-Umma border conflict*. Malibu: Undena Publications.

Cornelius, I. 1994. *The iconography of the Canaanite gods Reshef and Baʿal: Late Bronze and Iron Age 1 periods, c. 1500-1000 BCE*. Fribourg: Fribourg University Press.

Cornelius, I. 2009. "Aspects of the iconography of the warrior goddess Ištar." In Nissinen, M. & Carter, C.E. (eds.) *Images and prophecy in the ancient Eastern Mediterranean*. Göttingen: Vanderhoeck & Ruprecht, 15-40.

Crüsemann, N., van Ess, M., Hilgert, M., & Salje, B. 2013. *Uruk: 5000 Jahre Megacity*. Berlin: Michael Imhof Verlag.

DeMarrais, E., Castillo, L.J. &, Earle, T. 1996. Ideology, materialization, and power strategies. *Current Anthropology* 37(1):15-31.

Eagleton, T. 1991. *Ideology: an introduction*. New York: Verso.

Edzard, D.O. 1997. *Gudea and his dynasty*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

Eppihimer, M. 2010. Assembling king and state: the statues of Manishtushu and the consolidation of Akkadian kingship. *American Journal of Archaeology* 114: 365-380.

Enfield, N.J. 2005. The body as a cognitive artifact in kinship representations: hand gesture diagrams by speakers of Lao. *Current Anthropology*, 46(1): 51-81.

Evans, J.M. 2012. *The lives of Sumerian sculpture: an archaeology of the Early Dynastic temple*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Farnell, G. 1996. "Gesture and Movement." In Levinson, D. & Ember, M. (eds.) *Encyclopedia of cultural anthropology*, vol. II. New York: Henry Holt and Co, 536-541.

Feldman, M.H. 2007. 'Darius I and the heroes of Akkad: Affect and agency in the Bisitun relief.' In Feldman, M.H. & Cheng, J. (eds.) *Ancient Near Eastern art in context: Studies in honor of Irene J. Winter by her students.* Leiden: Brill, 265-293.

Feldman, M.H. 2008. "Mesopotamian art." In Snell, D.C. (ed). *A companion to the ancient Near East*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 304-324.

Franke, S. 1995. "Kings of Akkad: Sargon and Naram-Sin." In Sasson, J. (ed.) *Civilizations of the ancient Near East*, vol. IV. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 931-842.

Frankfort, H. 1943. *More sculpture from the Diyala region*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Frankfort, H. 1954. *The art and architecture of the ancient Orient*. Yale: Yale University Press.

Frankfort, H. 1965. *Cylinder seals: A documentary essay on the art and religion of the ancient Near East.* London: Gregg Press.

Frayne, D. 2008. *The royal inscriptions of Mesopotamian Early Periods I – Presargonic Period (2700-2350 BC).* Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

Gombrich, E.H. 1966. Ritualized gesture and expression in art. *Philosophical transactions of the -Royal Society in London. Series B, biological sciences*, 251(772): 393-401.

Green, A.R.W. 2003. *The storm-god in the ancient Near East*. Winona Lake, Indiana: Eisenbrauns.

Groenewegen-Frankfort, H.A. 1951. *Arrest and movement: An essay on space and time in three representational art of the ancient Near East*. Chicago: Chicago University Press.

Gruber, M.I. 1980. *Aspects of nonverbal communication in the ancient Near East.* Rome: Biblical Institute Press.

Hansen, D.P. 1988. A sculpture of Gudea, governor of Lagash. *Bulletin of the Detroit Institute of Arts,* 64(1): 4-19.

Hansen, D.P. 2003. "Art of the Akkadian empire." In Aruz, J., & Wallenfels, R. (eds.) Aruz, J. & Wallenfels, R. (eds). 2003. *Art of the first cities: The third millennium B.C. from the Mediterranean to the Indus*. New York: Metropolitan Museum of Art, 189-209.

Harper, P.O., Aruz, J. & Tallon, F. 1992. *Royal city of Susa: ancient Near Eastern treasures in the Louvre*. New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art.

Harris, R. 1975. *Ancient Sippar*: *A demographic study of an old-Babylonian city (1894-1595 B.C.)*. Leiden: Nederlands Historisch-Archaeologisch Instituut te Istanbul.

Hauser, A. 1973. *Kunst und Gesellschaft*. München: C.H. Beck.

Heidel, A. 1940. *The system of the quadriliteral verb in Akkadian*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Heimpel, W. 1992. Herrentum und Königtum im vor- und frügeschichtlichen Alten Orient. *Zeitschrift für Assyriologie* 82: 3-21.

Hurst, A. 2012. On the meaning of being real: Fantasy and 'the Real' in personal identity-formation. *South African Journal of Philosophy* 31(2): 278-289.

Jacobsen, T. 1976. *The treasures of darkness: a history of Mesopotamian religion*. Yale: Yale University Press.

Johandi, A. 2012. Mesopotamian influences on the Old Persian royal ideology and religion during the Achaemenid period. Unpublished MA thesis. University of Tartu: Faculty of Theology.

Keel, O. 1972. *Die Welt der altorientalischen Bildsymbolik und das Alte Testament: am Beispiel der Psalmen*. Zurich: Benziger.

Keel, O 1974. *Wirkmächtige Siegeszeichen im Alten Testament. Ikonographische Studien zu Jos 8,18.26; Ex 17,8-13; 2 Kön 13,14-19 und 1 Kön 22,11* (OBO 5). Fribourg & Göttingen: Universitätsverlag & Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht.

Keel, O 1982. Symbolik des Fußes im Alten Testament und seine Umwelt. *Orthopädische Praxis* 7/18, 530-538.

Keel, O. 1997. *The symbolism of the biblical world: ancient Near Eastern iconography and the Book of Psalms.* Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns.

Kendon, A. 2004. *Gesture: visible action as utterance.* Cambridge: University of Chicago Press.

Kendon, A. 2013. "History of the study of gesture." In Allan, K. (ed.) *Oxford Handbook for the History of Linguistics*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 71-89.

Kruger, P. 1989. On non-verbal communication in the Baal epic. *Journal for Semitics* 1: 54-69.

Kruger, P. 1998. "Nonverbal communication" in the Hebrew bible: A few comments. *Journal of Northwest Semitic Languages* 24/1: 141-164.

Kuhrt, A. 1997. *The ancient Near East, c. 3000-330 BC, Volume I.* New York: Routledge.

Leichty, E. 2011. *The royal inscriptions of Esarhaddon, king of Assyria (680-669 BC).* Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns.

Leick, G. 2003. *A Dictionary of ancient Near Eastern mythology.* London: Routledge.

Lewis, T.J. 2005. "Syro-Palestinian iconography and divine images." In Walls, N.H. (ed.) *Cult image and divine representation in the ancient Near East*. Boston: ASOR, 69-107.

Liverani, M. 1979. "The ideology of the Assyrian empire." In Larsen, M.T. (ed.) *Power and propaganda: a symposium on ancient empires.* Copenhagen: Akademisk, 297-317.

Magid, G. 2006. "Sumerian Early Dynastic royal inscriptions." In Chavalas, M.W. (ed.) *The ancient Near East: historical sources in translation.* Malden: Blackwell Publishing, 4-16.

Marchesi, G. & Marchetti, N. 2011. *Royal statuary of Early Dynastic Mesopotamia*. Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns.

Malandro, L.A., Barker, L.L., & Barker, D.A. 1989. *Nonverbal communication*. New York: McGraw-Hill.

Marx, K. & Engels, F. 2001. *The German Ideology part one, with selections from parts two and three, together with Marx's "Introduction to a critique of political economy".* New York: International Publishers.

Matthews, D.M. 1990. *Principles of composition in Near Eastern glyptic of the Later Second Millennium B.C.* Fribourg: Academic Press.

Mcintosh, J. 2005. *Ancient Mesopotamia: new perspectives.* Santa Barbara, California: ABC-CLIO.

McNeill, D. 2000. *Language and gesture: window into thought and action*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

McNeill, D. 2007. *Gesture and thought*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Michalowski, P. 2008. "The mortal kings of Ur: a short century of divine rule in ancient Mesopotamia." In Brisch, N. (ed.) *Religion and power: divine kingship in the ancient world and beyond.* Chicago: The Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago, 33-45.

Moortgat, A. *The art of ancient Mesopotamia: The classical art of the Near East*. London: Phaidon.

Mortensen, P. 1997. *Art in the social order: the making of the modern conception of art.* New York: SUNY Press.

Nel, P.J. 2000. Social justice as religious responsibility in Near Eastern religions: Historic ideal and ideological illusion. *JNSL* 26(2): 143-153.

Nigro, L. 1998. The two steles of Sargon: iconology and visual propaganda at the beginning of royal Akkadian relief. *Iraq* 60: 85-102.

Oates, J. 2003. *Babylon*. London: Thames & Hudson.

Ornan, T. 2003. On the dating of some Middle-Assyrian cylinder seals. *NABU* 3(September): 71-73.

Ornan, T. 2005. *The triumph of the symbol: Pictorial representation of deities in Mesopotamia and the biblical image ban,* OBO 213. Fribourg: Academic Press.

Panosky, E. 1983. *Meaning in the Visual Arts*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Parrot, A. 1961. *Nineveh and Babylon*. London: Thames & Hudson.

Perkins, A. Narration in Babylonian art. *American Journal of Archaeology*, 61(1): 54-62.

Pollock, S. 1999. *Ancient Mesopotamia: the Eden that never was.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Postgate, J.N. 1995. "Royal ideology and state administration in Sumer and Akkad." In Sasson, J. (ed.) *Civilizations of the ancient Near East.* New York: Scribner, 395-411.

Roaf, M. 2004. *Cultural atlas of Mesopotamia and the ancient Near East.* New York: Facts on File.

Root, M.C. 1979. *The king and kingship in Achaemenid art*. Leiden: Brill.

Ross, J.C. 2005. "Representations, reality, and ideology." In Pollock, S., & Bernbeck, R. (eds.) *Archaeologies of the Middle East: critical perspectives.* Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 327-350.

Roth, M.T. *Law Collections from Mesopotamia and Asia Minor*. Atlanta: Scholars Press.

Roux, G. 1992. *Ancient Iraq*, 3rd Ed. London: Penguin Books.

Selz, G. 1998. "Über mesopotamische Herrschaftskonzepte. Zu den Ursprüngen mesopotamischen Herrschaftsideologie im 3. Jahrtausend." In Dietrich, M., Loretz, O., & Balke, T.E. (eds.) *Dubsar anta-men: Studien zur Altorientalistik, Festschrift für Willem H. Ph. Römer zur Vollendung seines 70. Lebensjahres mit Beiträgen von Freunden, Schülern und Kollegen.* Münster: Ugarit-Verlag, 281-344.

Slanski, K.E. 2007. "The Mesopotamian 'rod and ring': Icon of righteous kingship and balance of power between palace and temple." In Crawford, H. (ed.) *Regime change in the ancient Near East and Egypt: From Sargon of Agade to Saddam Hussein*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 37-59.

Sollberger, E. 1969. Old-Babylonian worshipper figurines. *Iraq* 43(1): 90-93.

Spycket, A. 2000. "La baguette et l'anneau." In Dittman, R., & Calmeyer, P. (eds.) *Variatio Delectat. Iran und der Westen: Gedenkschrift für Peter Calmeyer*. Münster: Ugarit-Verlag, 651-666.

Steible, H. & Behrens, H. 1982. *Die Altsumerischen Bau- und Weihinschriften, 2 vols*. Wiesbaden: Steiner.

Steinkeller, P. 1999. "On rulers, priests and sacred marriage: tracing the evolution of early Sumerian kingship." In Watanabe, K. (ed.) *Priests and officials in the ancient Near East: papers of the second colloquium on the ancient Near East – the city and its life, held at the*

Middle Eastern Culture Centre in Japan (Mitaka, Tokyo), March 22 – 24, 1996. Heidelberg: Winter, 103-138.

Streeck, J. 2009. *Gesturecraft. The manu-facture of meaning.* Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

Strommenger, E. 1964. *The art of Mesopotamia*. London: Thames & Hudson.

Suter, C.E. 1991-1993. A Shulgi statuette from Tello. *Journal of Cuneiform Studies* 43/45: 63-70.

Suter, C.E. 2000. *Gudea's temple building: the representation of an early Mesopotamian ruler in text and image.* Groningen: Styx Publications.

Suter, C.E. 2010. "Ur III kings in images: A reappraisal." In Baker, H.D., Robson, E., & Zólyomi, G. (eds.) *Your praise is sweet: a memorial volume for Jeremy Black from students, colleagues and friends*. London: British Institute for the Study of Iraq, 319-349.

Suter, C.E. 2012. "Kings and queens: representation and reality." In Crawford, H. (ed.) *The Sumerian world*. London: Routledge, 201-226.

Suter, C.E. 2013. "Human, divine or both? The Uruk vase and the problem of ambiguity in Early Mesopotamian visual arts." In Feldman, M.H., & Brown, B.A. (eds.) *Critical approaches to ancient Near Eastern art*. Berlin: De Gruyter, 545-568.

Thureau-Dangin, F. 1909. 'L'U, le qa et la mine, leur Mesure et leur Rapport. *Journal Asiatique* 13: 79-111.

van Buren, E.D. 1931. *Foundation figurines and offerings.* Berlin: Hans Schoetz & Co.

van Buren, E.D. 1949. The rod and ring. *ArOr* 17(2): 434-450.

van de Mieroop, M. 2011. *A history of the ancient Near East, ca. 3000-323 BC.* Oxford: Blackwell Publishing.

van Dijk, R.M. 2011. The motif of the bull in the ancient Near East: an iconographic study. Unpublished MA Dissertation, Ancient Near Eastern Studies. University of South Africa.

Weissenrieder, A. & Wendt, F. 2005. "Images as communication: The methods of iconography." In Weissenrieder, A., Wendt, F. & von Gumünden, P. (eds.) *Picturing the New Testament: Studies in ancient visual images*. Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 3-49.

Westenholz, J. 2000. "The king, the emperor, and the empire. Continuity and discontinuity of royal representation in text and image." In Aro, S., & Whiting, R.M. (eds.) *The heirs of Assyria: Proceedings of the opening symposium of the Assyrian and Babylonian Intellectual Heritage Project. Held in Tvärminne, Finland, October 8-11, 1998*. Helsinki: The Neo-Assyrian Text Corpus Project, 99-125.

Wilkinson, R.H. 1991. The representation of the bow in the art of Egypt and the ancient Near East. *Journal of Ancient Near Eastern Studies* 20: 83-99.

Winter, I.J. 1995. "Aesthetics in ancient Mesopotamian art." In Sasson, J. *Civilizations of the ancient Near East*, vol. IV. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 2569-2582.

Winter. I.J. 1997. "Art *in* empire: The royal image and the visual dimensions of Assyrian ideology." In Aro, S., & Whiting, R.M. (eds.) *Assyria 1995.* Helsinki: Helsinki University Press, 359-381.

Winter, I.J. 2008. "Touched by the gods: visual evidence for the divine status of rulers in the ancient Near East." In Brisch, N. (ed.) *Religion and power: divine kingship in the ancient world and beyond.* Chicago: The Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago, 75-101.

Winter, I.J. 2010a. "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 Winter, I.J. (ed.) *On art in the ancient Near East, Volume II – From the Third Millennium B.C.E.* Leiden: Brill, 3-51.

Winter, I.J. 2010b. "How tall was Naram-Sin's Victory Stele? Speculation on the broken bottom." In Winter, I.J. (ed.) *On art in the ancient Near East, Volume II – From the Third Millennium B.C.E.* Leiden: Brill, 133-149.

Winter, I.J. 2010c. "Eannatum and the "King of Kiš"?: Another look at the Stele of the Vultures and "cartouches" in Early Sumerian art." In Winter, I.J. (ed.) *On art in the ancient Near East, Volume II – From the Third Millennium B.C.E.* Leiden: Brill, 53-63.

Winter, I.J. 2010d. "Sex, rhetoric, and the public monument: The alluring body of Naram-Sîn of Agade." In Winter, I.J. (ed.) *On art in the ancient Near East, Volume II – From the Third Millennium B.C.E.* Leiden: Brill, 85-107.

Wiseman, D.J. 1958. The vassal-treaties of Esarhaddon. *Iraq* 20(1): i,ii, 1-99.

Wolff, J. 1993. *The social production of art.* New York: New York University Press.

Yoffee, N. 1977. *The economic role of the crown in the Old Babylonian period*. Mailbu, CA: Undena.

Zwickel, W. 2012. "The iconography of emotions in the Ancient Near East and in Ancient Egypt." In Egger-Wenzel, R., & Corley, J. (eds.) *Emotions from Ben Sira to Paul*. Berlin: De Gruyter, 1-25.