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IŠTAR OF NINEVEH RECONSIDERED

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Forty years ago, M. Veyra produced his “prolegomenon” to the study of the goddess Ištar of Nineveh (1957),¹ a deity found not only in Assyria, but across the periphery of cuneiform civilization. Since that time, a number of scholars have dealt with this subject,² and I have now taken it up anew in connection with an edition of the Hittite *babili* rituals (CTH 718).³ These texts, which feature Akkadian language incantations within a Hittite context, are concerned with the worship only of the Ištar type Pirinkir (Beckman in press b), but they have drawn my attention to the general question of Ištar figures in second millennium Anatolia, among whom Ištar of Nineveh enjoyed particular prominence.

The earliest mention of Nineveh of which I am aware is in a text from Drehem dated to the

forty-sixth year of Šulgi. It records the offering of a lamb to the deity Šauša of this town.⁴ Since Šauša’s later form Šawuška can be identified with Ištar,⁵ it is more than likely that this document refers to the proprietor of the Ištar temple excavated by British archaeologists at Küyünjik.⁶ A text of Šamši-Adad I informs us that Maništušu had built this structure,⁷ while contemporary inscriptions of the latter’s brother and predecessor Rīmuš at Tell Brak⁸ and Aššur,⁹ as well as of

4. Schneider (1932, no. 79, lines 5–7): 1 sila₄niga / ^dŠa-u₁₈ (CISGAL)-ša / Ni-nu-a-kam. See also Whiting (1976, 174) and Wilcke (1988, 227). For the reading of the divine name and for examples (written with various *u*-signs) in personal names, see Gelb (1952, 54–55). Another early spelling without the velar is attested in a Hurrian text from Mari (Thureau-Dangin 1939, 2, no. 1, line 17): Ša-ú-uš-a-an.

5. Note that in the Ritual of Allaiturabhi (CTH 780, edited by Haas and Thiel 1978, 129–201), the deity is found in the Hittite portions as an *i*-stem (e.g., ^dIŠ₈-TÁR-iš, i 12’) and in the Hurrian “forerunners” as an Akkadogram with *a*-complementation (e.g., ^dIŠ₈-TÁR-an, §2’b:45’) or phonetically as ^dŠa-wu₄-uš-ga-an (§24’b:12’). Without complementation it is not possible to determine for a particular Hittite context whether the logogram ^dIŠ₈-TÁR was pronounced in Anatolian, Hurrian, or even Akkadian.

6. For preliminary reports, see Thompson and Hamilton (1932), and Thompson and Mallowan (1933). A final publication has never appeared.

7. Thompson and Hamilton (1932, 59–60, 105–6), lines 7–13: bi-tum é.me.nu.e ša i-na qa-qar é.maš.maš bi-tim la-bi-ri ša Ma-an-iš-ti-šu dumu Šar-ru-ki-in lugal A-ga-dē^{ki} i-pu-šu, “the shrine Emenue, which is on the grounds of the old temple Emašmaš built by Maništušu, son of Sargon, king of Akkad.” On the Emenue, see George (1993, 124, no. 774).

8. Mallowan (1947, 27, 66 pl. L, no. 4). The excavator suggests that this vase fragment was brought to the site by Narām-Sîn, whose brick fragments (see n. 10) reveal that he constructed a large building here.

9. Preusser (1954, 5–6, pl. 22b) publishes a macehead that reads: Rī-mu-uš / lugal / Kiš, “Rīmuš, King of the Universe.” Cf. also Michalowski (1993, 82).

Thanks are due to my colleagues among the fellows for 1997/98 at the Center for Judaic Studies of the University of Pennsylvania, with whom I discussed aspects of this essay, as well as to Piotr Michalowski for his advice on questions concerning Inanna/Ištar in the third millennium. Abbreviations for Hittite text publications and Hittitological works follow those given in *The Hittite Dictionary of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago*, Volume L–N, xv–xxviii, and Volume P, Fascicle I, ix–xi. All other abbreviations are those of *The Chicago Assyrian Dictionary*, listed most recently in Volume 17 (Š), Part III, v–xxii.

1. The continuation of the work promised in the second installment (see p. 137) seems never to have appeared. Laroche (1948, 114, n. 8) had already signaled the desirability of a special study of this deity, and more recently von Soden (1974–77, 49) suggested that a monograph on the Ištars of Nineveh, Arbela, and Aššur would be welcome. Although naturally outdated in many respects, Barton’s early study (1893, 131–55) is still useful for the first millennium material.

2. For the Anatolian material, see Haas (1979), Wegner (1981, 11–12), and Archi (1977). On the Assyrian sources, see Menzel (1981, 116–18).

3. See my preliminary discussion in Beckman (in press a).

Narām-Sîn at Tell Brak¹⁰ and Nineveh itself (Naab and Unger 1934, 41–44, pl. IV, nos. 6–7)¹¹ confirm early Sargonic control of the area. But it is by no means certain that the work of Maništušu was a new foundation,¹² and the goddess may well have been resident here long before. Since recent study indicates that the Hurrians did not enter this region much in advance of Sargonic penetration (Astour 1987, 15–16),¹³ it is possible that they took over this divinity from earlier inhabitants.

If so, they renamed her, for the name Šauša/Šawuška has now been shown to have a clear Hurrian etymology.¹⁴ Writers of later periods indeed recognized Šawuška as the particular Hurrian variety of Ištar,¹⁵ as demonstrated by the frequent occurrence of this name in Hurrian-language texts,¹⁶ as well as by a lexical list that identifies her as “Ištar (in/of) Su(bartu).”¹⁷ Perhaps the very association of the local Šauša/Šawuška with the southern Ištar already in the third

millennium came about because of the importance of the latter deity for the Sargonic overlords.¹⁸

Information from the earlier second millennium concerning the Ninevite goddess is scanty: In the prologue to his Laws, Hammurapi calls himself “the king who made the norms of Inanna glorious in Nineveh, in the temple Emešmeš,”¹⁹ but there is no further evidence from southern sources for reverence paid to Šawuška,²⁰ or indeed for any cult at all performed in Nineveh. For northern Mesopotamia, the previously mentioned inscription of Šamši-Adad I attests to his repair of Nineveh’s Ištar temple,²¹ and Ištar of Nineveh is among the types of this goddess whose receipt of offerings is documented in the texts from Nuzi.²²

While an Ištar figure seems to head the pantheon at Alalakh in the period of level IV (Na’aman 1980, 209–14), she is never associated with the Assyrian city. At Ugarit a scholarly list provides the sole attestation of our goddess.²³ For the Mittannian king Tušratta, however, Ištar/Šawuška of Nineveh was the chief deity. This is apparent from her invocation parallel to the Egyptian Sun God in the Hurrian ruler’s letters to Amenophis III.²⁴ Tušratta also lent an image

10. Stamped brick pictured by Mallowan (1947, 66, pl. LXIV): ^dNa-ra-am-/^dEN.ZU.

11. For the join of these fragments, see Weidner (1931/32, 280) and Hirsch (1963, 18: Narām-Sîn a.4).

12. Thompson and Hamilton (1932, 37–38, 73) speak of a “prehistoric period” with “some Sumerian connection.” See Thompson and Mallowan (1933, 127–33) for the material recovered from the sounding into the lower levels of the temple precinct.

13. As Piotr Michalowski points out to me, all that can be stated with certainty about the chronology of Hurrian settlement in Syro-Mesopotamia is that the Ebla archives of the twenty-fourth century reveal no trace of this people, while Old Babylonian copies of a Sargonic inscription which he tentatively attributes to Narām-Sîn (Michalowski 1986b) list Hurrian place names for northern Mesopotamia and/or the northern trans-Tigris region. Two fragmentary Old Akkadian documents from Tell Mozan recording predominantly Hurrian anthroponyms also attest to a Hurrian presence in northern Syria during the period of the “Sargonic empire” (Michalowski 1993, 81–82).

14. Wegner (1995): ša(v) = o = ši(=k) = a (root = derivational vowel = adjectival infix [= optional “honorific” infix] = theme vowel), “the Great/Magnificent One.” The recognition of this etymology only became possible with the use of evidence provided by the new Hurro-Hittite bilingual from Boğazköy (Neu 1996).

15. See the summary of the evidence in Wegner (1981, 24–25).

16. For attestations see Laroche (1978, 220).

17. KAV 173:23: []-uš-ka = ki.min (^dIš-tar) SU // CT 25.17: ^dŠa-uš-[] (Gelb 1944, 16). Or should this be understood as “Ištar (in/of) Su(ti)”?

18. Particularly in her manifestation as Ištar-Annunitum (see Roberts 1972, 147).

19. KH iv 6–63: lugal ša i-na Ni-nu-a^{ki} i-na é.meš.meš ú-ša-pí-ú me-e ^dInnin.

20. Renger (1967) has no references for Šawuška.

21. See Thompson and Hamilton (1932, 105–7). Since an Ištar temple was also in operation quite early in Assur (Andrae 1922, 3–53), it is likely that the attestations of Ištar in the texts from the Assyrian *kārum* at Kaneš (Hirsch 1961, 17–20) refer to the goddess of the political capital. However, since we have no indication that Ištar of Aššur was ever called Šawuška, the personal names ^mSú-us-ká-na and ^mSú-us-ká (Landsberger 1954, 124 with n. 288)—if they are indeed theophoric—may refer to the Ninevite.

22. In the “oil offering” lists we find Ištar of Nineveh along with Ištar Ḫumella, Ištar Akkupaweniwe, Ištar Tupukilḫe, Ištar Putaḫḫe, Ištar Allaiwašwe, and Ištar *bēlat dūri*. See Speiser (1936, 99, nos. 46–50) and cf. Deller (1976, 34, n. 6).

23. Ugar 5, 220–21, no. 149a: ^dInanna Ni-ná-a^{ki}.

24. See Hess (1986, 154) and Adler (1976, 362: “Šaušga—hurritische Liebesgöttin, Pendant zur akk. Ištar”) for lists of occurrences. All attestations are from the letters of Tušratta and refer to Ištar of Nineveh, save EA 359:1 (Izre’el 1997, 66, 69) from the šar *tamḫāri* text: ^dIšg-tār A-šu-ri-<ti>^{URU}A[k-kà-dè . . .]. Cf. however, Güterbock (1934, 87).

of the goddess to his Egyptian counterpart.²⁵ It is unclear whether her mission was to heal the elderly pharaoh or rather to bestow upon him connubial bliss (potency?) in connection with the dynastic marriage between Egypt and Mittanni (Kühne 1973, 37, n. 17).

The Boğazköy archives provide the bulk of our information concerning Ištar of Nineveh during the second millennium, but in the Old Hittite period neither she nor any other form of Ištar was of any real importance in Hatti. The names Ištar and Šawuška are both absent from the early historical texts, while only a single Old Hittite ritual mentions an Ištar. The relevant text is *CTH* 733 (Neu 1980, nos. 109–11; 1983, 342, index), where a number of Hattic deities are assigned differing designations among humans and among their divine colleagues. Thus the goddess Tašimmeti, a concubine of the Storm God, is called “Ištar, the Queen” by the gods,²⁶ while Taḫakšaziyati is known to her peers as “Ištar of Arising(?)”²⁷

Ištar acquired much greater importance in Hatti during Middle Hittite times—as a Hurrian deity introduced under Hurrian influence.²⁸ The first appearance of Ištar in a list of divine witnesses is to be found in a treaty between the Hittites and the Kaška concluded in the reign of Arnuwanda I and Ašmunikkal,²⁹ and the well-known resettlement of an Ištar figure from Kizzuwatna to the southeastern Hittite city of Šamuḫa took place in the late fifteenth century.³⁰ A number of records dealing specifically with Ištar of Nineveh, includ-

ing an invocation rite featuring the queen Taduḫepa,³¹ were also composed in this epoch.

In the texts from Hattuša, the Hurrian Ištar is rendered by ^dIŠ₈-TÁR (*HZL* no. 263),³² by ^dLIŠ (*HZL* no. 286),³³ by ^dGAŠAN (*HZL* no. 336), as well as by various phonetic spellings of Šawuška restricted to Hurrian contexts.³⁴ ^dInnin seems to be found in reference to a deity only in texts composed by non-Hittites,³⁵ while ^dXV is entirely absent. The Hittite pronunciation is shown by phonetic complementation to end in *li*, but the full form is not yet known. It obviously cannot be either the Tašimmeti³⁶ or the Taḫakšaziyati³⁷ mentioned earlier. Perhaps it is merely a substantivized Luwoid adjective in *-alli*.³⁸ For convenience I will continue to use the designation Ištar here.

Approximately twenty-five different local varieties of Ištar are present in the Boğazköy archives,³⁹ taking their designations from towns or

31. *KUB* 36.18 (*CTH* 364, MH/NS), *KBo* 10.45 (*CTH* 446, MH/LS), and *KBo* 16.97 (*CTH* 571, MS).

32. Although the divine determinative is optional with this writing in Mesopotamian documents, it is regularly present in texts composed at Boğazköy.

33. See Laroche (1947, 96; 1952, 117). This is probably simply an abbreviated writing of ^dIŠ₈-TÁR. Compare the writing ^dU for Ištar at Nuzi (Wilhelm 1970, 37, n. 3), which was not available to Boğazköy scribes due to its common use among them to represent the Storm God.

34. For a partial list, see Wegner (1981, 21).

35. For example, *KUB* 4.7 obv. 9 (*CTH* 801, Sumero-Akkadian bilingual), *KUB* 29.58 iii 35 (*CTH* 811, Akkadian), and *KUB* 37.38:3' (*CTH* 795, Akkadian). The most frequent use of Innin at Boğazköy is, of course, in the expression GIŠ^dINNIN(TUR), indicating a type of lyre or harp (Gurney 1977, 34–35; Badalı 1991, 370).

36. Outside of the context cited above, this deity appears only in *KBo* 17.15 rev. 12 and *KBo* 17.40 i 1 (*CTH* 645 = Neu 1980, no. 27); *KUB* 53.4 obv. 26 (*CTH* 638.2.G); and the fragmentary *HFAC* 131:3. I doubt that ^dTašmiz (*KBo* 21.84 iv 3; *KUB* 55.39 iii 26, 37; *KBo* 17.15 obv. 8–9) represents the same goddess, as suggested by Popko (1982, 146).

37. This deity is attested only in the fragments cited in note 27.

38. See *HEI* 2 §51b. The suggestion of Haas (1978, 68, n. 58) that *li* here is a Hurrian element should be rejected because forms with this complementation occur only in non-Hurrian contexts.

39. For a listing of local seats of Ištar/Šawuška, see Wegner (1981, 157–95), who includes all locations for which worship of this goddess is attested in Hittite documents. But since an

25. EA 23: 13–32 (Adler 1976, 170–74). This text also refers to an earlier visit of the divine image to the court of Amenophis III, in the time of Tušratta's father.

26. Neu (1980, no. 109) ii 7'–9': *Tašimmetiš* = ^dIŠTAR-iš munus.lugal-aš.

27. Neu (1980, no. 109) iii 10–12: *Taḫakšaziyatiš* = *arauwaš* ^dIŠTAR. Broken no. 110 ii 34 and no. 111 iii 17'–18' are similar. *HW*², 258 is uncertain whether to assign *arauwaš* to *arai-*, “arise,” or to *arawa-*, “free.” Cf. Popko (1982, 146).

28. On this Hurrian political and cultural penetration of Hatti, see Wilhelm (1982, 44–45).

29. *CTH* 139 ii 10 (von Schuler 1965, 110).

30. *CTH* 481, edited by Kronasser (1963). Cf. Lebrun (1976, 18).

mountains. While most of these places seem to have been situated in northern Syria or south-eastern Anatolia, a few—such as Katapa and Lanta—must be sought in the central Hittite area. Still, it is significant that no Ištar is called after Ḫattuša, Nerik, Ankuwa, Zippalanda,⁴⁰ or any other early Hittite center. The most satisfactory explanation for the association of Ištars with but a few central Anatolian cities is importation by a dynasty with southern cultural affiliations. By far the most frequently attested of these geographically designated goddesses are Ištar of Šamuḫa⁴¹ and our Ištar of Nineveh, and it is probably the entire class which is referred to as “all the Ištars of the land of Ḫurri.”⁴²

The relationship of these Ištar-figures to one another is difficult to untangle. On the one hand, mythological texts of Hurrian background employ the epithet “Queen of Nineveh” in addition to, and in alternation with, simple Ištar.⁴³ On the other, lists of divine witnesses from the Empire period usually place unmodified Ištar, sometimes followed by Ištar of the Battlefield, before the

goddess of Nineveh,⁴⁴ who in turn precedes all other local types. Geographic and other epithets are seldom interchangeable, and a deity does not often bear more than one epithet at a time.⁴⁵ I believe that we are dealing with hypostases of a single divine archetype (see Wilcke 1976–80, 79–80), a situation similar to that surrounding the various Zeus figures of classical antiquity,⁴⁶ or the local manifestations of the Virgin in Catholic belief.⁴⁷ In some respects these Ištar-figures partake of a common essence, while in others they are distinct, as demonstrated by the individual offerings made on occasion to large numbers of such Ištars.⁴⁸

While I am inclined to follow the common opinion that the other Ištar types of the later Boğazköy texts, in particular Ištar of Šamuḫa,⁴⁹ are basically “avatars” or hypostases of the Nine-

Ištar of one town might be honored in another, and my interest here is precisely in the local manifestations, I have counted only deities bearing geographic epithets. Add to Wegner's data: ^dIŠ₈-TÁR URU Ma-nu-uz-zi-ya (KBo 29.207:5'), ^dIŠ₈-TÁR URU Du-un-na (KBo 22.162 rev. 4), ^dIŠ₈-TÁR URU Du-pa (KUB 48.122 rev. 4; KUB 56.31 iv 23), and possibly ^dLIŠ(?) URU Aš-mi-ya[-] (KBo 28.57:9'; see Hagenbuchner 1989, 445).

40. Note that a late Hittite fragment recording earlier traditions speaks of an “Ištar Spring” (^dIŠ₈-TÁR lu-ú-li-aš, KBo 16.49 i 11') at Zippalanda. Popko (1994, 28) believes that an indigenous goddess stands behind the ideogram here.

41. Popko and Taracha (1988, 113) speculate that Šawuška of Šamuḫa was worshiped in the temple of Ea at Ḫattuša.

42. KUB 56.31 iv 21': [k]u-i-e-eš-ša ku-i-e-eš ^dIŠ₈-TÁR.ḪIA ŠA KUR URU Ḫur-ri ḫu-u-ma-an-t[e-eš]. In light of such references, “Ištar ḪURRI” of Syrian and Egyptian texts must also be the “Hurrian Ištar,” and not “Ištar of the Cave(s),” or similar, despite the recent remarks of Lackenbacher (1986, 156–57). To her objection that “Hurrian Ištar” would require the form *ḫurritu, note the sequence KUR.KUR.MEŠ Ḫur-ri (not *ḫurrûtu) found frequently in Hittite texts (e.g., KBo 6.28 obv. 19; see RG 6, 120–21, for a collection of such forms). That is, in these instances we have (Akkadographic) constructs with an indeclinable second element.

43. For example, a manuscript of the Myth of Hedammu (CTH 348), KUB 33.84+::18 (= Siegelová 1971, 44–45, line 20) has ^dIŠ₈-TÁR URU Ne-nu-wa-aš MUNUS.LUGAL, but unmodified IŠTAR several lines further on.

44. For convenient access to examples, see the index to Beckman (1996, 196).

45. An obvious exception to this generalization is ^dIŠ₈-TÁR LÍL/ŠE-E-RI/awariwi URU Šamuḫa, “Ištar of the Field of Šamuḫa” (Lebrun 1976, 15–18).

46. See Cook (1964 [originally published 1914–40], 776–79) for a summary discussion of the various functional and local Zeus/Jupiter figures (which he calls “art-types”), some of whom arose through the extension of the god's sphere of activity, while others represent a fusion of originally independent divinities. In his indices (pp. 1258–59), Cook provides a listing of the numerous epithets borne by this deity.

An interesting example of the merging of gods may also be adduced from Palmyra, where the Levantine Ba'al Šamain and Bel of Mesopotamian origin maintained separate temples, yet seem to have been melded into a single figure as head of the local pantheon. Both could be addressed as Zeus. See Teixidor (1977, 135–40, 143).

47. Signori (1996, 611) writes of a “principe d'individuation” through which the original unitary figure of the Christian Lady assumed a variety of local manifestations, most of which acquired unique “curricula vitae” in the form of collections of miracles performed in different sanctuaries. This process of fission is the inverse of the amalgamation of deities into Zeus/Jupiter discussed in the previous note. See the remarks of van der Toorn (1997, 11–12) on the tendency of worshipers to invest a certain quality of divinity in an image or other physical representation of a deity and thus to attribute a particular identity to each regional variety of a god or goddess.

48. See especially the offering lists in KUB 45.41 ii and iii. In most instances ^dIŠ₈-TÁR has been lost along with the right portion of the column, leaving only the Hurrian geographic designations. See KUB 45, Index, p. x.

49. See, for example, Lebrun (1976, 16).

vite goddess,⁵⁰ any special features of the varieties will become apparent only if each is initially studied in isolation. Therefore in the discussion which follows I will adduce evidence solely from contexts in which an Ištar is explicitly said to be “of Nineveh,” or “the Ninevite,” or where the deity and the town appear in contiguity.

Our Ištar possesses a number of epithets in addition to “Queen of Nineveh.”⁵¹ In Hurrian passages she might be called by the genitive expression “(she) of Nineveh” (*Ninuwawi*⁵²), or by the ethnicon “the Ninevite” (*Ninuwahi*⁵³). Also found are the Hittite phrase *taršikantaš* MUNUS-aš, lit. “the woman of that which is repeatedly spoken”⁵⁴—apparently a reference to her involvement with incantations—and the unclear Luwian *tiwayali* Ištar.⁵⁵

Despite the hospitality extended to her by the Hittites, Ištar of Nineveh remained a transient in Ḫatti, maintaining strong connections to her home town.⁵⁶ In two *evocatio* rituals she is summoned

50. The liver omen report *KBo* 16.97 rev. 12-32 (*CTH* 571) seems to employ ^{URU}IŠ₈-TÁR ^{URU}Ni-nu-wa (rev. 12) as a cover term for the goddesses that follow, including DINGIR.GE₆ ^{URU}Ša-mu-u-ḫa, DINGIR.GE₆ ^{URU}La-aḫ-ḫu-u-ra, ^{URU}IŠ₈-TÁR ^{URU}Ḫa-at-ta-ri-na, ŠA AMA-ŠU ^{URU}IŠ₈-TÁR, ŠA A-BI-ŠU ^{URU}IŠ₈-TÁR, and *ta-ma-i-iš-za ku-iš-ki* ^{URU}IŠ₈-TÁR.

See also the Song of Silver (*CTH* 364) where the protagonist is told: ŠEŠ-aš-ma-at-ta ^{URU}U-a[š . . .] / [(na-aš-ša-an né-pt-š) i LUGAL-uš] *š na-aš* KUR-e-an-ti LU[GAL-uš] / [nu-ut-ta (NIN-KA ^{URU}GAŠAN-iš n)] *a-aš* ^{URU}Ne-nu-wa MUNUS.LUGA[L-aš], “Your brother is the Storm God [. . .] He is [king] in heaven, and he is [king] in the land. Your sister is Ištar, and she is queen in the city of Nineveh” (*KUB* 36.18 ii 12–14 and dupl.; ed. Hoffner 1988, 152–54). As the Storm God in this passage is the *Haupttyp* of this deity, Ištar is surely not merely a local variety here either.

51. Cf. also the Hurrian equivalent *al-la-a-i* ^{URU}Ni-nu-wa-wa_a *Ša-uš-ga*, “Šawuška, Lady of Nineveh,” *KUB* 47.17:3’, and *a-la-an-ni Ne-nu-wa-ar*, *KUB* 45.53 iii 11’. See Laroche (1978, 43, 184).

52. For attestations see Laroche (1978, 184).

53. See Laroche (1978, 184) and note also the Luwian [^{URU}Ni-nu-wa-an-na-aš-ša-ti, *KUB* 35.30 ii(?) 3’ (*CTH* 761) for which see Laroche (1959, 130) (“epithete de Šaušga”).

54. *KUB* 17.7+ iii 34’: ^{URU}IŠ₈-TÁR-iš ^{URU}Ni-nu-wa-aš MUNUS.LUGAL-aš *tar-š[i-i]k-kán-ta-aš* MUNUS-aš.

55. *KUB* 15.35 i 21: *ti-wa-li-ya* ^{URU}IŠ₈-TÁR.

56. The city of Nineveh is otherwise of little importance in the Boğazköy archive. Note only a single mention in a broken Akkadian-language letter about military campaigns in the south: KUR ^{URU}A-šur₄ ^{URU}Ni-nu-w[a], “Assyria (and?) Nineveh,” *KBo* 28.145:7’; DINGIR.MEŠ-na ^{URU}Ni-nu-wa-wi-na,

thence for worship,⁵⁷ and other evidence reveals her continued residence in the Assyrian city.⁵⁸ In addition, a single text each associates her with the Old Akkadian kings Sargon and Narām-Sîn.⁵⁹

In Ḫatti, the land of her sojourn, Ištar of Nineveh was welcomed in the capital, to whose pantheon she belonged during the Empire period,⁶⁰ and where she possibly had a temple or cult room.⁶¹ She was also honored in the Kizzuwatnaean city of Kummanni⁶² and at a number of other towns which cannot yet be located.⁶³ She

“the gods of Nineveh,” *KUB* 25.44 i 7’ (*CTH* 704, Hurrian), possibly associates of Ištar; [TUG]BAR.DUL₈ ^{URU}Ni-nu-wa, “a Ninevite garment,” *KBo* 18.175 vi 2 (*CTH* 241); and a damaged colophon from a shelf list: [. . . K]UR² ^{URU}Ne-nu-wa KUR-az ar-ḫa ^{URU}N[e² . . . / . . .] *x-ya-aš ir-ḫi pa-ra-a a-ra-a-an-z[i . . .]*, VBoT 133:8’–9’ (*CTH* 276).

The incantation *KBo* 19.145 iii 32’–34’, as restored from *KUB* 34.101, right col. (*CTH* 788; ed. Haas and Thiel 1978, 302–3) reads: [(. . . a-)a-a]n-te-eš NA₄[ḪI]A / [(^{URU}Ni-nu-wa-az ḪURSAG) o o o -š]a²(-)zi-ya-[o o -a]z² / [(pa-ra-a ú-e-er) . . .], “The hot stones came forth from Nineveh and Mt. [. . .].” Since an ^{URU}IŠ₈-TÁR also appears in this charm (iii 36’), it is probably relevant for the magical role of the goddess whom we are investigating here. Finally, *KUB* 32.121 ii 35 (*CTH* 788) is also in a magical context, but is too fragmentary for interpretation.

57. *KUB* 15.35 + *KBo* 2.9 i 21–39 (*CTH* 716). For translation, see Beckman in Knapp (1996, 34 no. 42). Note the presence here of Nineveh, Rīmuš (or Talmuš², see Michalowski 1986a, 139, n. 17), and Dunta at the head of what otherwise looks like a boilerplate list of geographic names.

58. The Tale of Appu (*CTH* 360; ed. Siegelová 1971, 16–17, iv 13–20) records the dispersal of gods to various towns: the Moon God to Kuzina, the Storm God to Kummīya, IŠTAR to Nineveh, Nanaya to Kiššīna, and Marduk to Babylon.

In a Ritual for Chthonic Deities, *KBo* 10.45 ii 45–46 (*CTH* 446; ed. Otten 1961, 124–25) we read: ^{URU}IŠ₈-TÁR-iš *li-li-wa-an-za na-aš-ta* ^{URU}Ni-nu-az / SUR₁₄.DÜ.A^{MUSEN} *IGI-an-da pa-a-it*, “Ištar has wings (cf. *CHD* L-N, 62). She flew from Nineveh to meet the falcon.”

59. Sargon: *KUB* 31.3 rev. 4’–13’ (*CTH* 775, Hurrian); Narām-Sîn: *KUB* 48.112.

60. ^{URU}IŠ₈-TÁR ^{URU}Ni-nu-wa takes her place among the gods of Ḫattuša listed in the Prayer of Muwattalli II, *KUB* 6.45 i 53 (*CTH* 381; ed. Singer 1996, 11, 33).

61. This may be implied by the oracle report *KUB* 5.10 + *KUB* 16.83 (*CTH* 567, ed. Vieyra 1957, 132–33, 136), which deals with offences occurring in the É.DINGIR-LIM of Ištar of Nineveh. No other town is mentioned in this text, so we may perhaps assume that the temple or shrine in question was located in Ḫattuša.

62. *KUB* 41.102.

63. *KUB* 38.6 i 18–23 and iv 12’–22’ (*CTH* 510) include Ištar of Nineveh among the deities worshiped in the Ruined Town

was a member of the *kaluti*, or “circle,” of Ḫebat of Ḫalab,⁶⁴ yet displays her own entourage in texts devoted to her particular service.⁶⁵

Beside the episodic evocation rituals (see n. 56), Ištar of Nineveh also enjoyed regular worship in Ḫatti: monthly festivals,⁶⁶ as well as seasonal rites of winter,⁶⁷ spring, and autumn.⁶⁸ Particular to her were the *zinzabuššiya*-songs,⁶⁹ a Hurrian genre called after a type of bird.⁷⁰ Texts from her cult often contain incantations in Hurrian,⁷¹ and

termini technici in this language abound.⁷² The attendant personnel is of the sort associated with Hurrianized cult at Ḫattuša, headed by a “seer.”⁷³

The role played by Ištar of Nineveh in the Hittite imperial cult was not especially prominent, for the strand of Hurrian religion that influenced the development of this system was one in which Ištar had yielded her position near the head of the pantheon to the Syrian goddess Ḫebat (see Laroche 1976; Trémouille 1997, 217–22). Thus our Ištar appears rather far down the lists of divine treaty witnesses (see n. 44), and the number of texts devoted to her worship is small compared to those treating the Storm God Teššub, Ḫebat, or even the Protective Deity.⁷⁴

In Anatolia, the special competence of Ištar of Nineveh lay in the realm of magic. She had chthonic associations, was on occasion approached through a ritual pit,⁷⁵ and is once found in the company of the Sun Goddess of the Earth and the primeval deities.⁷⁶ She is beseeched to cure disease, including plague,⁷⁷ and asked to lift curses.⁷⁸

A thorough comparison of this Hurrian magician and healer to other varieties of Ištar in Ḫatti remains a task for the future, after special studies have been completed on each of her principal

of ^mḪurlišša, in Šappitta, in Šapagurwanta, and in Mallitta. In the similar KUB 57.106 all geographic names have been lost.

64. In KBo 14.142 i 20–33 (CTH 698) various offerings are made to ^dḪē-bāt ^{URU}Ḫa-la-ab and other deities, including ^dIšg-TÁR ^{URU}Ne-nu-wa (i 28), and in conclusion, ŠA ^dḪē-bāt KAS-ya ḫu-u-ma-an-ti ka-lu-ti pī-ra-an ši-p[a-a]n-da-an-zi, “they pour a libation of beer before all the circle of Ḫebat” (i 32–33). Laroche (1948, 122) includes Ištar of Nineveh as no. 10 in his reconstruction of Ḫebat’s *kaluti*.

In light of the differences between the east- and west-Hurrian pantheons (Laroche 1976; Trémouille 1997, 217–22), the assignment of Ištar of Nineveh to this group must have taken place in either Syro-Palestine or in Kizzuwatna, or perhaps even in Ḫattuša.

65. In addition to the ubiquitous Ninatta and Kulitta, CTH 714 includes DINGIRMEŠ *hé-pa-ru-un-na aš-tu-uh-ḫi-na*, Šarrinaša⁷, ^dŠa-(a)-ú-ri a-bu-ú-bu, Tar[ru] Takidi, Ea Dam-[kina], Aya Šimegi, DINGIRMEŠ ^dIšg-TÁR-wi-na aš-ḫu-ši-ik-ku-un-ni-ni-wi[-na], Išhara, Altani, Umbu Ni[kkal], and Uršui. CTH 715 has Ḫutena Ḫutelurra, the *marapši* Storm God, and “every Ištar.” Finally, CTH 716 associates the Sun Goddess of the Earth and the primeval deities with Ištar of Nineveh.

66. KUB 10.27 colophon (CTH 714): ṬUP-PU ma-a-an MUNUS.LUGAL A-NA ^dIŠTAR ^{URU}Ne-nu-wa KASKAL-ši EZEN.ITU i-ya-zi QA-TI, “(One) tablet, complete: When the Queen performs the monthly festival for Ištar of Nineveh on the road/path.” Since it could hardly be envisioned that the monarch would be underway during every month, the KASKAL here is probably yet another reference to the magical trails set out in evocation rites.

67. CTH 715.

68. CTH 510 and KUB 57.101.

69. Catalogue entry KUB 8.69 iii 1–2 (CTH 276): DUB.1.KAM SIR.ḪIA zi-in-za-bu-uš-ši-y[a-aš] / ŠA ^dIšg-TÁR ^{URU}Ni-nu-wa, “One tablet: *zinzabuššiya*-songs of Ištar of Nineveh.” The text referred to is probably preserved in KBo 2.23 + KBo 33.151 + IBoT 3.80 + KUB 45.40 (+) KUB 47.65 (ChS I/3, no. 41). See *Inhaltsübersicht* to KUB 45, sub no. 40. KUB 47, 66–67 probably also belong to this text.

70. Laroche (1976, 305) suggests “colombe(?)” for this bird. Note also the *zinzabuššiya*-rhyton employed in Ištar’s cult: BI-IB-RU KÜSIG₁₇... zi-in-za-bu-uš-ši-aš, KUB 5.10 obv. 3 (CTH 567), and the Ištar-hypostasis(?) ^dZi-in-za-a-bu-wa-ze-e-na, KUB 45.33 obv. 11 (CTH 713).

71. In addition to the preceding examples, see CTH 715.

72. Note the use of the vessels *aḫ-ru-uš-ši* and *ḫu-up-ru-uš-ḫi* (CTH 714; see Kammenhuber 1986), and washing with *ši-he-el-li-ya-aš wa-a-tar* (CTH 714; see Vieyra 1957, 96–98). Many of the *Opfertermini* listed by Haas and Wilhelm (1974, 59–142), including *keldi*, *zuz[umakiya]*, *ḫariya*, *ḫuwalziya*, and *unalziya*, also appear in CTH 714. The second line of the colophon of KUB 41.25 (CTH 720) is probably to be restored as [... Š]A ^dIšg-TÁR ^{URU}Ne-nu-wa ^{EZEN}d[u-up-ša-ḫi], for which festival see Laroche (1959, 99–100).

73. ^{LÚ}ḪAL/AZU (see Gurney 1977, 45–46). In editing CTH 714, Vieyra (1957, 85–87, 89–92) consistently misreads AZU as SANGA. Other personnel active here include musicians (^{LÚ}MEŠNAR), *katra*-women, the *kireštena*-man, and the mysterious MUNUS.MEŠ KA×KAK *ḫattanteš*, on whom see Lebrun (1979, 115, n. 26).

74. Her worship is the focus of relatively few texts, primarily CTH 714–716, and KUB 41.25 (CTH 720). Note also the lost rituals listed in the oracle report KUB 5.10 + KUB 16.83 (CTH 567, ed. Vieyra 1957, 132–33, 136): ^{EZEN}aš-ra-ḫi-ta-aš-ši, ŠA ^{LÚ}ki-re-eš-te¹-na ^{EZEN}ḫal-zi-ya-wa-aš, and EZEN A-YA-RI.

75. CTH 716. On these openings to the underworld, see Hoffner (1967).

76. KUB 15.35 + KBo 2.9 i 43; cf. iv 39 (CTH 716).

77. KUB 15.35 + KBo 2.9 i 63–65.

78. KUB 48.112. Note 1-EN *ut-tar ḫu-uk-[ma-in²...]* in i 10’.

manifestations.⁷⁹ It can already, however, be observed that the Anatolian Ištar of Nineveh does not display either the pronounced astral⁸⁰ or martial (Lebrun 1976, 17)⁸¹ aspects characteristic of Ištar of Šamuha. Nor does she seem to share the latter's close relationship to the Hittite royal house (Lebrun 1976, 20–24).

The paucity of relevant Assyrian material rules out comparison of the Hittite Ištar of Nineveh with her realization in contemporary Mesopotamia.⁸² In the first millennium, however, the evidential situation is precisely reversed: Iron Age sources mentioning Ištar of Nineveh come ex-

clusively from Assyria.⁸³ Here I can only touch briefly upon this material.⁸⁴

During the late period, the é.maš.maš in Nineveh was repaired on several occasions and even enlarged, and a school of poets seems to have operated under its aegis (see Lambert 1961, 157–58). Ištar continued to serve as the primary deity of her city, and her name is frequently invoked in the penalty clauses of contracts concluded in Nineveh.⁸⁵

Our goddess was often connected with Ištar of Arbela,⁸⁶ and the characters of both in turn were colored by that of Ištar of Assur. Hence the Ninevite was paired with the imperial god Aššur, and under the later Sargonids she was identified with his companion Ninlil (Streck 1916, 746–48).⁸⁷

The Ninevite goddess appears in the company of other deities in letter salutations,⁸⁸ and in a curse of Esarhaddon she is invoked: “May Ninlil, dweller in Nineveh, bind upon you (pl.) a [swift] dagger of iron!”⁸⁹ In the context of a vassal treaty this might be a metaphor for death in battle, or for assassination.

Aššurnasirpal I calls upon Ištar of Nineveh to relieve his suffering from physical and psychological ills (von Soden 1974–77, 38–45). The goddess's role as healer seen earlier in Hittite sources thus makes its reappearance here.

79. Wegner (1981) is the point of departure for any such investigation. Thorough research has thus far been carried out only on Ištar of Šamuha (Lebrun 1976, 15–25), Pirinkir (Beckman in press b), and herewith Ištar of Nineveh. Sufficient material exists for detailed consideration also of the Ištars of Hattarina, Lawazantiya, and Tameninga, as well as of the Deity of the Night and Pirwa.

80. It is almost certain that the Deity of the Night (DINGIRGE₆) of Šamuha is identical to the IŠTAR/Šaušga of the same city (Lebrun 1976, 31). *KUB* 29.4 i 6–12 (*CTH* 481) describes the construction of an image of the Deity of the Night as follows: “The smiths fashion the deity from gold. They also set about decking out the deity with the accoutrements appropriate for her. Stuck on her back like beads are disks of gold, lapis, carnelian, ‘Babylonian stone,’ chalcidony(?), *dušu*-stone, and marble, (as well as) life-symbol(s) and morning stars(?) of silver and gold. They set about fashioning them in this manner.” For transliteration, see Kronasser (1963, 6). Whatever the particular shape of the divinity whose likeness is constructed here, the ornamented rear surface seems to represent the night sky.

81. The oracle question *KUB* 32.130:25–34 (*CTH* 710) well-illustrates this aspect of the goddess' activities: “(Let it be investigated through augury) whether this (future worship) is pleasing to you, Ištar of the Battlefield of Šamuha, (whether) you will accept the ritual and turn in favor to My Majesty, and (whether) you will stand favorably by me—(and whether) you will stand favorably by me when I go against the land of the enemy, and (whether) you will hold yourself (protectively) before my person for (my) prosperity and survival, and (whether) you will deliver my enemies to me, so that I might destroy them.” For transliteration, see Lebrun (1976, 168).

82. Thompson and Hamilton (1932, 63) claim that a passage in an Assyrian poetic text, now known to have been composed in praise of Tukulti-Ninurta I, is a reference to Ištar of Nineveh. See Machinist (1978, 120–21) v 44': *i-ta-al-la-lu* *ḏEŠDAR a-ḫu-la-ap AŠ te-se-e i-na-ad-du be-el-ta*, “They give the shout ‘O Ištar, be merciful!’ (and) in the melee praise the mistress.” However, we cannot be certain which Assyrian Ištar is intended here. Note especially that it is Ištar of Arbela who is later most frequently endowed with martial qualities (see n. 86).

83. Šawuška continues to be mentioned in the hieroglyphic Luwian inscriptions, e.g., *MALATYA* 6 (Hrozný 1937, pl. CVI.1): *Sa-us-ga* (damaged), with the figure of the goddess standing upon two birds. There are no attestations for Nineveh, however.

84. For a fuller compendium, see Menzel (1981, 116–18).

85. Usually in the standard phraseology: “He will pay N mina of (refined) silver and N mina of gold (alloy) to Ištar of Nineveh/Ištar who dwells in Nineveh.” For transliteration and references, see Menzel (1981, 118).

86. See Streck (1916, 748–50) for the close association of this goddess with both oracles and warfare.

87. It is not certain whether they should be understood as a married couple (Lambert 1983).

88. For example, Waterman (1930, nos. 6, 62, etc.). For further references see the index in vol. IV, p. 159, although the occurrences of our Ištar in salutations are not distinguished there from those in other contexts.

89. Wiseman (1958, 63–64), lines 457–458: *ḏNin.lil a-ši-bat* *uruAB×ḪA^{ki} [g]ír an.bar [ḫa-an-tu it-ti-ku-nu li-ir-ku-su*. See *AHu* 946 for *rakāsum* as “(Böses) heften an.”

Finally it should be noted that Ištar of Nineveh displays Hurrian characteristics into the latest times. Sargon II still addresses her by her ancient appellation⁹⁰: “Šawuška, dweller(!?) in Nineveh,”⁹¹ while one section of her temple continued to be known as the *bīt nathī*, or “bedroom,” a term that

90. Yet another of her names might have been Mullissi, if this is indeed the Neo-Assyrian pronunciation of ^dNin.lil (see Menzel 1981, 117).

91. Lyon (1883, 9, line 54): ^dŠa-uš-ga ra-ši-bat [error for a¹-ši-bat?; cf. AHw 960] AB×HA^{ki}.

preserves a Hurrian lexeme attested centuries earlier in connection with Anatolian Ištars.⁹²

Thus the cult of the goddess Ištar/Šawuška endured for at least fifteen centuries at Nineveh. This cult held fast to elements of its non-Akkadian character and at times extended its influence to the ends of the civilized world.

92. For details see Vieyra (1975). Additional Hurrian relics in Neo-Assyrian cult have been collected by Weidner (1945–51).

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