Dress and Identity in Old Babylonian Texts

By

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Abstract

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The present study argues that using dress theory is a productive means of reading cuneiform texts from ancient Mesopotamia. Although anthropological studies on dress have flourished in recent years, and despite the economic and social importance of dress in ancient Mesopotamia, previous research has focused on either archaeological remains or pictorial representations of dress; however, anthropological theories on dress have not yet been applied to ancient Mesopotamian cuneiform texts written in Sumerian and Akkadian. This is surprising, given that the rich and varied cuneiform textual tradition provides a unique perspective on these cultural phenomena.

Three major anthropological theories on dress have been identified: the semiotic approach, in which an item of dress functions as a symbol, representing not the item of dress itself, but an abstract idea or concept; the dress as material object approach, in which the focus is on the item of dress itself as an object that can communicate aspects of identity; and the use of dress in the construction of identity approach, which emphasizes the surface of the body, and looks at the body as a medium on which identity can be constructed using dress. It builds off of the second approach in that it requires understanding what aspects of identity an item of dress is communicating, in order to understand how the individual is using dress to actively construct identity.

This study starts with a philological analysis of items of dress that appear in texts to discern what aspects of identity are expressed through the item (dress as material object approach) in order to examine what identity the individual is constructing (or having constructed for him or her) by the use of various items of dress (dress used in the active construction of identity approach). Since dress plays an important role in a wide variety of texts (from legal to administrative to epistolary) throughout all of Mesopotamian history, it would be beyond the scope of this study to examine every text in which dress appears. The purpose of this study is to apply these methods to a selected group of texts from the Old Babylonian period, to demonstrate both the use and the usefulness of these methods in reading ancient Mesopotamian texts. This study examines selected texts in three different contexts: literary, legal, and ritual.
The chapter on literary contexts focuses on the composition “Inana’s Descent to the Netherworld,” and argues that identity, as expressed through dress, plays a key role in understanding various aspects of the text, including the significance of Inana’s dressing and undressing, why Inana was judged for her attempt to take over the Netherworld, and why she handed over Dumuzi as a substitute for herself.

The chapter on legal contexts focuses on the use of the hem of the garment in legal contexts. It argues that the hem of the garment is equivalent to a cylinder seal in expressing an individual’s legal identity, which carries with it both rights and responsibilities. As a result, it can be used to bring about a change of identity for the woman in both marriage and divorce.

The chapter on ritual contexts focuses on the use of dress to bring about a change of identity through a rite of passage at various points in the life cycle: at birth, and at death. At birth, dress is used to start constructing the newborn’s gender identity (as opposed to its biological sex). At death, dress is used to transfer the deceased from being a living member of the community to being among the dead.

Thus, looking at dress as a material object that can communicate identity, in order to understand how the individual involved is constructing his or her identity (or having his or her identity constructed) is a valuable way of reading (or re-reading) ancient Mesopotamian cuneiform texts. Not only does it make it possible to investigate the idea of identity, which might otherwise not be directly accessible, but it also illuminates aspects of the texts that might be puzzling or else overlooked, if items of dress are treated not as items of dress, per se, but as symbols that represent something else.
To the one who has done immeasurably more than all I could have asked or imagined
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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The present study argues that using dress theory is a productive means of reading cuneiform texts from ancient Mesopotamia. Although anthropological studies on dress have flourished in recent years, and despite the economic and social importance of dress in ancient Mesopotamia, previous research has focused on either archaeological remains or pictorial representations of dress; however, anthropological theories on dress have not yet been applied to ancient Mesopotamian cuneiform texts written in Sumerian and Akkadian. This is surprising, given that the rich and varied cuneiform textual tradition provides a unique perspective on these cultural phenomena. Dress appears in an extremely broad range of text genres. Legal texts include references to dress in widely differing contexts, from describing the veiling of women to listing items of dress included as dowry components to reporting the tearing of the wife’s hem in divorce proceedings. Ration lists and other temple administrative documents mention the distribution of wool or cloth for the manufacture or preparation of garments, as well as materials and finished items used to decorate those garments. Temple records show that deities received various items of dress including clothing, which was often richly decorated with small objects fashioned from precious metals, and that their garments were repaired or restored. Certain items of dress might be required for ritual participants to wear or carry. Letters and other texts reveal that garments could even play a role in diplomatic contexts through their use as gifts or as items required and requested by diplomats. Dress also plays an important role in the literary tradition, for example, as a marker of the transitional state of mourning in “Adapa and the South Wind.”

In this chapter, I will start with a definition of dress and an overview of relevant theories of dress, followed by a brief discussion of identity in ancient Mesopotamia, and finally the goals of the study.

1.1 Dress

Dress is “an assemblage of modifications of the body and/or supplements to the body”.\(^1\) This includes but is not limited to hairstyles, tattoos or other skin colorations, body piercings, garments, jewelry, weapons, and other accessories. Dress has been classified according to sub-type (relationship to the body) and properties (physical attributes). There are two major sub-types: body modifications and body supplements. Body modifications include transformations of hair, skin, nails, the muscular/ skeletal system, teeth, and breath.\(^2\) Body supplements include enclosures (items of dress that surround the body), attachments to the body, attachments to body enclosures, and hand-held objects. These may be further sub-divided as follows: enclosures may be wrapped, suspended, pre-shaped, or any combination of these; attachments to the body and


\(^2\) Ibid., 8.
attachments to body enclosures can be inserted, clipped, or adhered; hand-held objects
are held by the self or by someone else. Properties include color, volume and
proportion, shape and structure, surface design, texture, odor, sound, and taste. For
example, a sari would be a body supplement, an enclosure that is wrapped around the
body; its color, surface design, texture, and shape (depending on how it is wrapped) could
vary. These ways of classifying dress, taking into account both their sub-type and
properties are summarized in Table 1.

Table 1: Classification system for dress

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I. Subtypes of Dress</th>
<th>B. Body Supplements</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A. Body Modifications</td>
<td>1. Enclosures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>a. Wrapped</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b. Suspended</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>c. Pre-shaped</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>d. Wrapped &amp;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>e. Suspended &amp;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>f. Suspended &amp;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>g. Wrapped,</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. Attachments to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>a. Inserted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b. Clipped on</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>c. Adhered</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Attachments to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>a. Inserted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b. Clipped on</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>c. Adhered</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4. Hand-held</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>a. By self</td>
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<td></td>
<td>b. By other(s)</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A. Color</td>
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<tr>
<td>B. Volume &amp;</td>
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<tr>
<td>C. Shape &amp;</td>
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<tr>
<td>D. Surface</td>
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<tr>
<td>E. Texture</td>
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<tr>
<td>F. Odor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G. Sound</td>
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<tr>
<td>H. Taste</td>
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I complicate these classifications by adding a final consideration: the permanence of the
dress—is it intended to be permanent, semi-permanent, or temporary? For example,
tattoos, henna tattoos, and body paint are all body modifications that are transformations
of the skin using color and surface design. However, tattoos are intended to be
permanent, henna tattoos are semi-permanent, while body paint is temporary.

I have chosen to use the term “dress” to refer to modifications of and supplements
to the body because it is both precise and more inclusive than other terms that have been
suggested in the literature. At the same time, it lacks certain connotations associated with
other terms. For example, “appearance” implies an emphasis on the visual component,
while ignoring other senses, such as touch or smell. “Adornment” or “ornament”
implies an aesthetic judgment, based on a societal standard of beauty. Anything that is
not considered to be “beautiful” might be overlooked or ignored. “Apparel” and
“clothing” do not include body modifications or supplements that are either

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3 Ibid.
4 Ibid.
5 Ibid., 9.
6 Ibid., 10.
attachments to enclosures, or hand-held objects. Further, “clothing” often carries value judgments, such as modest vs. immodest. “Costume” implies something out of the ordinary, such as something used in the theater, or at festivals, ceremonies, and rituals. “Fashion” is too broad, since it can be used to describe everything from music to scientific theory. At the same time, “fashion” also carries a value judgment—is it widely accepted or obsolete? “Fashion” also excludes things that purport to resist change, such as academic regalia.

In the earlier days of dress studies, the focus was on semiotic explanations of dress. Dress was considered to be an object that functioned as a symbol. Perhaps the most important work in this regard was Roland Barthes’ *Système de la mode* (1967), in which he examined written descriptions of clothing in French fashion magazines from June 1958 through June 1959. Barthes describes the relationship between “image-clothing” (the represented object) and “written clothing” (the described object) in Saussurean terms, as the opposition between language and speech. Barthes writes:

Language is an institution, an abstract body of constraints; speech is the momentary part of this institution which the individual extracts and actualizes for purposes of communication; language issues from the mass of spoken words, and yet all speech is itself drawn from language; in history this is a dialectic between the structure and the event, and in communication theory between the code and the message. Now in relation to image-clothing, written clothing has a structural purity which is more or less that of language in relation to speech.

Barthes analyzes what he called the vestimentary code in order to uncover a system of meaning. Barthes delineates four levels of the vestimentary code: 1) the real vestimentary code, 2) the written vestimentary code or the terminological system, 3) the connotation of fashion, and 4) the rhetorical system. The most influential, however,

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7 Barthes, for example, deliberately omitted hairstyles and makeup from his study of written clothing (clothing as it is described in writing) in fashion magazines. See Roland Barthes, *The Fashion System*, trans., Matthew Ward and Richard Howard, 1st Paperback ed. (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1990), 11.
8 Roach-Higgins and Eicher, 10.
9 Ibid.
10 Ibid. Academic regalia presents itself as timeless, even if it has changed over time.
11 R. Barthes argues that no cultural object, including clothing, is purely functional; the function of the object also becomes a sign of itself. For example, while an umbrella might be used to protect the user from rain, at the same time it becomes a symbol for rain. Barthes notes that the sign can then easily become separated from its original function, and operate on its own. For example, although a ten-gallon hat might have originally functioned to protect its wearer from the weather, it has become a sign for “Western.” See Barthes, 264-265.
12 Ibid., 17.
13 Ibid., 17-18.
14 See Ibid., 36.
was his first level, the real vestimentary code, in which a real garment or a feature of it (the signifier) is brought together with an empirical circumstance in the real world, such as an occasion for wearing it (the signified) into a single sign.\(^{15}\) As a result of Barthes’ work, the idea of “the language of clothing,” in which clothing was analyzed as a linguistic system, enjoyed a time of popularity.\(^{16}\) In its most extreme form, this “language” had its own vocabulary, syntax, grammar, and punctuation.\(^{17}\)

A great deal of the evidence for dress in Mesopotamia is written, not material. Further, since texts are written using signs or symbols, the semiotic approach seems particularly apt for a text-based corpus, which is probably why this approach has been favored by scholars of ancient Mesopotamia.\(^{18}\) Thus, in the myth, “Inana’s Descent to the Netherworld”, Inana’s dress is usually understood to symbolize either her sexuality or her power. While the semiotic approach can yield some valuable results, other anthropological approaches might help us to consider the bigger picture. But why use anthropology for studying dress in ancient Mesopotamia? In her 2000 article in the journal Dress, Joanne B. Eicher points out four facets of anthropology that have contributed to the study of dress: holism, culture, fieldwork, and women’s Involvement.\(^{19}\)

\(^{15}\) Ibid., 34. Paradoxically, the usage of only this first level is at odds with Barthes’ stated intent for his study. He wrote, “…this study actually addresses neither clothing nor language but the ‘translation,’ so to speak of one into the other, insofar as the former is already a system of signs: an ambiguous goal, for it does not correspond to the customary distinction which puts the real on one side and language on the other; thus, it escapes both linguistics, the science of verbal signs, and semiology, the science of object-signs.” See Barthes, x.

\(^{16}\) It is possible, though, that the idea of clothing as a language goes back even further. P. Calefato argues L. Wittgenstein uses this metaphor in Proposition 4.002 of his Tractatus logico-philosophicus. See Patrizia Calefato, The Clothed Body, trans., Lisa Adams (Oxford: Berg, 2004), 5-6.

\(^{17}\) See, for example, Alison. Lurie, The Language of Clothes (New York: Random House, 1981).

\(^{18}\) For example, see M.E. Vogelzang and W.J. van Bekkum, ”Meaning and Symbolism of Clothing in Ancient Near Eastern Texts,” in Scripta Signa Voci: Studies about Scripts, Scriptures, Scribes, and Languages in the Near East, Presented to J.H. Hospers by His Pupils, Colleagues, and Friends, ed. H.L.J. Vanstiphout et al. (Groningen: Egbert Forsten, 1986), 265-284. Vogelzang and van Bekkum focus on the written description of the garment. They assert that the mention of an article of clothing can indicate necessity (protection of the body), economy (commercial value), legislation (reward or punishment), elegance (external ornamentation), affectivity (mourning, submissiveness, or joy), or profession (status). See Vogelzang and Bekkum, 266. In practice, however, they take a strictly semiotic approach. For example, in literary texts, the mention of nudity (the removal of clothing) becomes a literary device indicating the misfortune that will happen to the person in question, such as Gilgamesh’s loss of the plant of life while bathing or Enlil’s loss of the tablet of destinies to the Anzu-bird while bathing. They believe Enlil is vulnerable because he has removed his clothing, which are symbols of his divinity. See Vogelzang and Bekkum, 267-268.

The first aspect is what she calls “holism”. Anthropology connects the biological, social, historical, and cultural aspects of human life. Holism looks at dress, not just as an object, but also as something worn on the body in a larger sociocultural context.\(^\text{20}\) Thus, if someone is wearing a costume, it makes a big difference in how that costume is understood, depending on whether the person is an actor performing on stage or dressed up for Halloween. Granted, it might be more difficult to reconstruct the sociocultural context for dress in Mesopotamia, but it is still important to ask the question.

The second aspect is culture. Eicher defines culture as “how human beings teach and learn ‘proper conduct’ within a specific setting.”\(^\text{21}\) In the realm of dress, this refers to what is considered culturally appropriate to wear or not to wear. As might be expected, these ideas are not set in stone; one is free to change one’s mind or may be persuaded to change one’s mind about the appropriateness of an item of dress. A natural corollary to the concept of culture is cultural diversity. It quickly becomes evident that different groups wear or do not wear different things and for different reasons.\(^\text{22}\) Thus, it is important to keep in mind when attempting to understand dress in Mesopotamia that what is true for one city, say Sippar, during the Old Babylonian period, would not necessarily be applicable to another city during the Old Babylonian period, or Sippar or other cities during a different time period.

The third area is fieldwork. Anthropologists learn the indigenous language and live among the target group in order to make their own first-hand observations and interpretations about the culture. In dress studies, both learning the terms for dress and observation of behavior and practices associated with the dress are important.\(^\text{23}\) Granted, observation of behavior and practices isn’t applicable to ancient Mesopotamia, since it is impossible to do fieldwork. However, the same interpretive skills that are used in fieldwork can be applied to either the written or the visual record.\(^\text{24}\) For example, cuneiform scholars can learn the terms for dress from written sources rather than from living individuals. Nevertheless, we still have a long way to go in identifying and understanding many terms related to dress or textiles, although progress is being made in this area.\(^\text{25}\)

The fourth area is women’s involvement. Both issues of gender and the contributions of women scholars have been crucial in the development of the anthropology of dress. The women who have chosen to study dress greatly outnumber

\(^{20}\) Ibid.: 59.
\(^{21}\) Ibid.
\(^{22}\) Ibid.: 59-60.
\(^{23}\) Ibid.: 60.
\(^{24}\) As Dr. Gary Holland has pointed out to me.
the men. In Mesopotamian studies, it is primarily women scholars who have carried out the majority of gender studies, for example.

In the 1980’s, attention turned from looking at dress as a language or code to dress as a material object. In fact, G. McCracken (1988) finds the metaphor of the “language of clothing” problematic, because of the differences between the way clothing and language communicate messages. First, he notes that clothing, unlike language, is limited in the ways that it can be combined—clothing can only express certain types of messages, while language is more flexible. For example, clothing cannot communicate the medical condition of one’s grandmother. Second, since the meaning that clothing conveys is not explicitly expressed, it can make a statement (political or otherwise) that could cause controversy, protest, or refusal if expressed overtly through language. Third, clothing is not universally interpretable. Different cultures, or even different sub-groups within a single culture, may take away different messages from the same clothing. For example, the controversy over the wearing of headscarves by Muslim women in France has recently resurfaced. According to one poll, over 80% of the French oppose Muslim women wearing the headscarf to work, if the women have contact with the public. A clash between France’s longstanding commitment to principles of secularism and the religious implications of the headscarf for its wearers is one of the causes of this controversy. Finally, McCracken argues that clothing, unlike language, cannot communicate news, opinions, irony, metaphor, skepticism, ambivalence, surprise,

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26 Eicher: 60.
reverence, or hope. D. Miller is troubled by the metaphor as well, but focuses instead on the strengths of dress as a means of communication. While language derives an overall meaning from its individual component parts (e.g. words, grammar, syntax), an object such as dress must be analyzed as a whole. As such, dress can communicate ideas and emotions with a higher degree of power and precision than language has the capacity to do so. One of the symbolic functions of objects was believed to be “information transmission”; as such, it was believed that objects could impart clear meanings. Thus, dress could convey various aspects of culture such as social status, ethnicity, gender, etc. In the same way, dress was also seen as a communicator of identity. Using symbolic interaction theory, Roach-Higgins and Eicher suggested that individuals are able to acquire a number of identities through various kinds of social interactions; dress can be used to communicate these identities by indicating the social position of the individual both to the individual and to the ones interacting with that individual in that particular situation. The self, then, is an amalgamation of an individual’s identities, based on the various social positions an individual holds.

In the late 1980’s there was a shift in the understanding of culture. Rather than culture being viewed as something that is composed of material (i.e. objects, such as dress) and non-material products of a society (meanings, beliefs, values, ideas, norms, etc.), culture came to be viewed as something that is fashioned through agency, practice, and performance by individuals. Thus, the focus of dress studies shifted from the item of dress itself as an object (one material product of a society) to the body surface of the individual who utilized dress.

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30 McCracken, 67-69. While McCracken is generally correct that there are differences between dress and language, there are some problems with his specific examples. One could dress ironically by dressing in ways that are incongruent with one’s identity. For example, a feminist in the U.S. could dress like a housewife from the 1950’s.

31 In distinguishing between language and objects, Miller cites the work of Susanne K. Langer. Although Langer’s work focused on fine art, Miller finds it applicable to other objects, including dress. See Miller, 96-97.


34 See, for example, the articles in the section entitled “Caste and Class” in Mary Ellen Roach and Joanne B. Eicher, eds., Dress, Adornment, and the Social Order (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1965), 158-184.


37 Roach-Higgins and Eicher, 12.

38 Ibid.

Turner, in referring to the body surface, came up with the idea of the “social skin”. He saw the body surface as the interface between the individual as a biological and psychological organism and the social self, which interacts with society at large.\(^{40}\) Thus, dress, which touches this interface,\(^{41}\) becomes a way of mediating the often complicated relationship between the individual and the social self. As such, the dressed body is a natural locus for talking about identity;\(^{42}\) recent scholarship has focused on the use of dress as part of the active construction of identity.\(^{43}\)

The different approaches to dress that have been described in this introduction are summarized in Table 2:


\(^{41}\) Hansen, 372.

\(^{42}\) The idea of the relationship between the body and clothing is not entirely new. Barthes refers to Hegel’s *Esthétique* in discussing the way that the body was in a “relationship of signification with clothing.” See Barthes, 258. Hegel writes, “It is clothing which gives the body’s attitude its relief, and for this reason it must be considered an advantage, in the sense that it protects us from the direct view of what, as sentience, is devoid of signification,” (G. W. F. Hegel, Esthétique, trans. S. Jankélévitch (Paris: Aubier, 1944), 3:1:147) as cited by Barthes, 258 n. 20.

\(^{43}\) For example, see Genevive Fisher and Diana DiPaolo Loren, “Introduction: embodying identity in archaeology,” *Cambridge Archaeological Journal* 13(2003): 225-230. It is interesting to note that although Barthes was widely influential in the semiotics of clothing, he actually discussed the idea of fashion being used to create multiple identities. Based on J.-P. Sartre’s *Critique of Dialectical Reason*, Barthes identified three different concepts: 1) a popular and poetical one, in which the garment creates the person; 2) an empirical one, in which the person is expressed through the garment; 3) a dialectical one, in which there is what he calls a “turnstile” between the person and the garment. See Barthes, 256-257, 256 n. 16.
Table 2: Summary of anthropological approaches to dress

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Approach</th>
<th>Emphasis</th>
<th>Function of Dress</th>
<th>Modern example (business suit)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>semiotic (dress as symbol)</td>
<td>object as a symbol/code; dress as a “language”</td>
<td>represents another object or an abstract concept</td>
<td>business suit represents “power”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dress as material object</td>
<td>the object itself</td>
<td>communicates identity (e.g. social status, gender, etc.)</td>
<td>communicates identity as a professional (i.e. not a manual laborer)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dress used in the active construction of identity</td>
<td>the surface of the body</td>
<td>is used by individual to construct a chosen identity</td>
<td>Barack Obama wears a Hart Schaffner Marx suit and a Brooks Brothers topcoat to present himself as a statesman like Abraham Lincoln</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1) The semiotic approach looks at dress as a symbol; the emphasis is on the symbolic or code-like nature of dress. 2) The second approach looks at dress as a material object; the focus is on the object of dress itself; it functions as a communicator of identity. 3) The final approach looks at the use of dress in the active construction of identity; the emphasis is on the surface of the body itself, which allows dress to mediate between the individual and the social self; dress functions as a means construct an identity that the wearer wants to project to others (whether accurate or not). The differences among these approaches can be seen in the perceptions of the modern business suit.

In the 1980’s business suits were called power suits. In the semiotic approach, a business suit is not considered to be a business suit, per se, but might be considered to be a symbol of power. In the approach that considers dress as material object, a business suit worn to work might convey that the wearer has an identity as a professional (as opposed to a manual laborer). For the third approach, the construction of identity, consider Barack Obama’s dress for his 2009 inauguration. He wore a custom-made Hart Schaffner Marx suit. Over it, he wore a Brooks Brothers topcoat, as did his political idol, Abraham Lincoln. Given the other parallels between Obama and Lincoln—Obama announced his candidacy in the shadow of the old state building in Illinois, where Lincoln gave his famous “a house divided against itself” speech, and, like Lincoln, took a train into Washington, D.C. for his inauguration—it would be reasonable to suggest that Obama was deliberately constructing his identity as a statesman like Lincoln, even down to the smallest details of dress. While the first and second approaches could stand on their own as theoretical approaches to understanding what dress means, the third approach is dependent on the second approach. Unless there is some agreement within a particular culture or group about what the particular item of dress conveys about an individual’s identity (the second approach), it would be impossible for someone to construct an identity (whether accurate or not) to be conveyed to others (the third approach). The
present study uses a detailed philological analysis of the various items of dress in the
textual record of ancient Mesopotamia during the Old Babylonian period in order to
discern what each item might convey about an individual’s identity (the second approach)
in order to discuss the construction of identity through the use of dress (the third
approach).

While the majority of these dress studies have focused on the use of dress in
contemporary or recent historical contexts, there has been interest in recent years in dress
in the ancient world. In 2002, a conference entitled “The Clothed Body in the Ancient
World,” held at the University of Birmingham (UK), attracted participants from all over
Europe, the United States, and the Middle East. Several of these presentations were later
published in the conference proceedings. These studies covered ancient Egypt and the
Aegean, classical Greece, imperial Rome and late antiquity. In a 2007 article, A. Gansell
examined jewelry from the Royal Cemetery at Ur. In 2008, Colburn and Heyn edited a
collection of papers on adornment in the ancient Mediterranean. In the same year, A.
Baadsgaard completed a dissertation on dress in Early Dynastic Mesopotamia. In 2010,
M. Gleba discussed Scythian costume and identity. Most recently, A. Thomason has
organized sessions on dress at the 2011 and 2012 ASOR meetings. The overwhelming
majority of these works, however, have focused on material culture, either objects
themselves (e.g. jewelry) or representations of dress (e.g. sculptures, in paintings or
reliefs, or on other objects).

1.2 Identity in Mesopotamia

In the social sciences, there are three major ways to think about identity. First,
identity can refer to ethnicity. Second, identity can be viewed more broadly, such as

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social (e.g. gender, status, age) or political identity.\textsuperscript{51} Third, identity can refer to individuals and their own self-perceptions about their place in society.\textsuperscript{52} For ancient Mesopotamia, it is most productive to look at either ethnicity or social or political identity, given the limitations of the textual record.\textsuperscript{53} K. van der Toorn argues that in Mesopotamia, a person could not be separated from his or her social role or status.\textsuperscript{54} Thus, according to van der Toorn, identity in the Old Babylonian period


\textsuperscript{53} Self-reference is rare in Akkadian literature. See Benjamin R. Foster, "Self-Reference of an Akkadian Poet," \textit{JAOS} 103 (1983): 123-130. For a recent study on the person in Mesopotamia, see Benjamin R. Foster, "The Person in Mesopotamian Thought," in \textit{The Oxford Handbook of Cuneiform Form}, ed. Karen Radner and Eleanor Robson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011). Foster covers a range of topics, from the definition of a human being to the physical person to the notion of self. K. Radner takes a different approach, focusing on the idea of the name. She sees the name both as a means of assuring the identity of an individual and as a way of representing the individual. After death, the individual could be assured of a continued existence by having descendants who would invoke one’s name during regular rituals, through achieving fame, or through having one’s name written down. See Karen Radner, \textit{Die Macht des Namens: altorientalische Strategien zur Selbsterhaltung} (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2005). For a summary and review of Radner’s work, see Dominique Charpin, "Chroniques bibliographiques 11. Se faire un nome: la louange du roi, la divinisation royale et la quête de l’immortalité en Mésopotamie," \textit{RA} 102 (2008): 162-180. Most recently, U. Steinert has done an extensive study on personhood in Mesopotamia, including brief discussions throughout on identity. See Ulrike Steinert, \textit{Aspekte des Menschseins im Alten Mesoopotamien: eine Studie zu Person und Identitat im 2. und 1. Jt. v. Chr.} (Leiden: Brill, 2012), 6ff., 15ff., 85ff., 123ff., 132ff., 201ff., 213ff., 234ff., 257ff., 264ff., 308ff., 322ff., 331ff., 437ff., 454ff., 470ff., 494ff., 514ff. Steinert, citing Z. Bahrani’s 2001 book \textit{Women of Babylon. Gender and Representation in Mesopotamia} and her 2008 book \textit{Rituals of War. The Body and Violence in Mesopotamia}, points out that the Mesopotamian concept of a person includes the body, name, hem, pictorial representation of the individual, etc. See Steinert, 123. For Steinert (p. 514), the head represented the social identity, reputation, honor, and status of the person. She concludes that the Mesopotamian understanding of personal identity is both holistic and pluralistic, with no opposition between “body” and “soul”; rather people are made up of multiple components (p. 124).

\textsuperscript{54} Karel van der Toorn, \textit{Family Religion in Babylonia, Syria, and Israel : Continuity and Change in the Forms of Religious Life} (Leiden and New York: E.J. Brill, 1996), 115-118.
is not what you are deep down, but what you manifest to be: it is public and social...In their construction of personal identity, Babylonians attached little importance to what they were in their own eyes; what mattered to them was their public image...The social identity of a Babylonian was not merely descriptive: it was, in many ways, a role to be performed and a career to be anticipated.\textsuperscript{55}

Thus, the present study focuses on the construction of social identity through dress.\textsuperscript{56} Since dress plays an important role in a wide variety of texts (from legal to administrative

\textsuperscript{55} Ibid., 117-118.

to epistolary) throughout all of Mesopotamian history, it is beyond the scope of this study to examine every text in which dress appears. The present study looks at the construction of social identity in a selected group of texts from the Old Babylonian period, to demonstrate both the use and the usefulness of these methods in reading ancient Mesopotamian texts. This study examined selected texts in three different contexts: literary, legal, and ritual. Which aspects of a person’s social identity were important, however, varies depending on the context.

1.2.1 Identity in Literary Contexts

Deities figure most prominently as characters in literary texts. Several different elements are crucial in describing a deity’s identity. First, a deity is generally associated with...
with a specific city, where his or her major temple and cult exist. Second, a deity has a specific role or sphere of influence. This specific role or sphere of influence is part of a deity’s identity, what distinguishes one deity from another. Third, a deity has a family and household, including servants, such as a minister (Sumerian sukkal). These relationships establish a deity’s identity in reference to other gods (e.g. father, husband, son, master, etc.). For example, Enlil’s city is Nippur, and his main cult center is the temple E-kur. Enlil is generally considered to be the head of the pantheon. His wife is Ninlil; his children include Iskur, Nanna-Suen, Nergal, Ninurta/Ningirsu, and Utu. His minister (sukkal) is Nusku. Enki’s city is Eridu and his main cult center is the temple E-abzu. He is the god of the subterranean fresh water (Sumerian abzu), and is associated with wisdom and magic. His wife is Damgalnuna, and his children include Marduk, Asarluhi, and Nanše. His minister is Isimud. Similar specific identifying attributes can be discerned for most of the gods of the Mesopotamian pantheon. In this way, even an unnamed deity, as is sometimes the case in the iconographic record, can be identified. Inana is perhaps the exception, having multiple identities. While her main cult center is

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58 For example, in lines 267-385 of the literary text “Enki and the World Order,” Enki gives each deity different functions and places them in charge over varying spheres. For an edition of this text, see Carlos Alfredo Benito, “Enki and Ninmah” and "Enki and the World Order"." (Ph.D. diss., University of Pennsylvania, 1969), 85-137. For an electronic edition of this text, see “Enki and the world order” lines 267-386 (ETCSL no. 1.1.1) http://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk/cgi-bin/etcsl.cgi?text=c.1.1.3&display=Crit&charenc=gcirc#.

59 While relationships among deities may be mentioned in literary texts (e.g., when a deity refers to another deity by a familial relationship, such as “sister” or “brother-in-law,” these relationships also appear in the so-called “god lists,” in which a deity (along with any alternative names) is listed, followed by his or her spouse, children, and servants. Admittedly, these texts come from the Middle Babylonian period or later. For editions of these texts, see Richard L. Litke, A Reconstruction of the Assyro-Babylonian God-Lists, AN: dA-NU-UM and AN: ANU ŠÁ AMELI (New Haven: Yale Babylonian Collection, 1998). God lists do exist from as far back as the Fara period, and existed during the Old Babylonian period, but these lists do not specify the relationships among the gods, as do the later texts. The arrangement of the material may hint at these relationships, however. For example, the Old Babylonian god list AO 5376 lines 38-50 (TCL 15 25ff) starts with the god Enlil, includes various alternative names for him, and ends with Ninlil, Enlil’s spouse, and two alternative names for her. This corresponds roughly to the later text YBC 2401 obv. i 118-147; the Nineveh text K 4340+79-7-8 obv. ii 38-45 (CT 24 5); the Nineveh text K 4349 obv. i 95-109 (CT 24 22); the Nineveh text K 4333 obv. ii 6-8 (CT 24 5). For more general information on god lists, see W. G. Lambert, "Götterlisten," in RIA 3. Fabel-Gyges (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1957-1971), 473-479.

60 Most scholars agree that Inana (Akkadian Ištar) may be a merging of several different goddesses. This may account for the numerous traditions associated with her. See, for
the E-ana in Uruk, she also had important cult centers in Zabala (northern Mesopotamia), Agade, and Kiš. Inana’s main spheres of influence are sex and war; she is also associated with the morning and evening star (i.e. the planet Venus, in modern terms). Her familial relationships are likewise complicated: in some traditions, she is related to An, which makes sense, since they are both associated with the E-anna temple in Uruk. This relationship varies, however. In some places, she appears to be the wife of An, while in other she is the daughter of An. In other traditions, she is the daughter of the moon god Nanna. The sun god Utu is her brother, and the goddess of the underworld, Ereškigal is her sister. Dumuzi is sometimes her husband, sometimes her lover. Her minister is Ninšubur. Inana’s complicated identity is important in the literary text “Inana’s Descent,” and will be explored in more detail in Chapter 2.

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61 Several cones describe how the king Sîn-kāšid built the E-papah for An and Inana when he built the E-anna. For editions of this text, see Douglas R. Frayne, *Old Babylonian Period*, ed. A. Kirk Grayson et al., RIME 4 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1990), 452-453.

62 “Šara A” lines 4'-5’, where she is also the mother of Šara. For an edition of this text, see Åke W. Sjöberg, "Three Hymns to the God Ningišzida," *Studia Orientalia* 46 (1975b): 308-310.

63 So Jeremy Black and Anthony Green, *Gods, Demons and Symbols of Ancient Mesopotamia. An Illustrated Dictionary*. (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1992), 108. It is not always clear that An is Inana’s actual father, rather than “father” being an honorary title. In “Inana and Ebih” line 64, Inana addresses An as “my father.” However, in lines 23 and 52, she is described as the daughter of Suen (Nanna). For an edition of this text, see Pascal Attinger, "Inana et Ebih," *ZA* (1998): 168-181. For an electronic edition of this text, see “Inana and Ebih” (ETCSL no. 1.3.2) [http://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk/cgi-bin/etcsl.cgi?text=c.1.3.2&display=Crit&charenc=gcirc#](http://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk/cgi-bin/etcsl.cgi?text=c.1.3.2&display=Crit&charenc=gcirc#).

64 “Inana C” line 2. For an edition of this text, see Åke W. Sjöberg, "in-nin šà-gur₄-ra: A Hymn to the Goddess Inanna by the en-Priestess Enheduanna," *ZA* 65 (1975a): 178-201. For an electronic edition of this text, see “A hymn to Inana (Inana C)” (ETCSL no. 4.07.3) [http://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk/cgi-bin/etcsl.cgi?text=c.4.07.3&display=Crit&charenc=gcirc#](http://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk/cgi-bin/etcsl.cgi?text=c.4.07.3&display=Crit&charenc=gcirc#).

65 “Inana’s Descent” line 370, where Dumuzi, Inana’s husband, addresses Utu as his brother-in-law. For an edition of this text, see William Sladek, “Inanna's Descent to the Netherworld” (PhD diss., The Johns Hopkins University, 1974), 103-181. For an electronic edition of this text, see “Inana’s descent to the nether world” (ETCSL no. 1.4.1) [http://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk/cgi-bin/etcsl.cgi?text=c.1.4.1&display=Crit&charenc=gcirc#](http://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk/cgi-bin/etcsl.cgi?text=c.1.4.1&display=Crit&charenc=gcirc#).

66 “Inana’s Descent” lines 86-87.

67 “Inana’s Descent” lines 27-30.
1.2.2 Identity in Legal Contexts

One important aspect of a person’s identity is his or her legal identity, which carries with it both rights and responsibilities. Facets of a person’s legal identity might correspond to his or her social identity (e.g. son, wife, slave); nevertheless, these aspects of identity were significant in that they affected both the legal rights and responsibilities of an individual. (The corresponding social identity would, in the same way, affect the individual’s social obligations and interactions.) While gender was not a barrier to access to the law (women were able to bring lawsuits, although sometimes their male relatives initiated lawsuits on their behalf), social status could affect it. For example, a slave was unable to litigate on his own behalf; in one case, his mistress did so for him.

A person’s social status also played an important role in determining both his or her social interactions and his or her legal rights and responsibilities. Old Babylonian society can be divided into three social strata: the avīlum, or upper class; the muškēnum, or middle class; the wardum, or lower class (literally “slave”). Van der Toorn points

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68 In her 2001 article, M. Roth examines and raises objections to two ways of reading legal texts. The first is what she calls the “Hammurabi’s Gesetz assumption.” This way of reading texts assumes that “Old Babylonian law” can be reconstructed, based on both the law codes and the documents of practice. The second is what she calls the “evolutionary assumption.” According to this assumption, a development in Mesopotamian law can be seen through the sources, and that it was not as sophisticated as our own. (One major proponent of the “evolutionary assumption” is R. Westbrook. See Raymond Westbrook, "The Character of Ancient Near Eastern Law," in A History of Ancient Near Eastern Law, Volume One, ed. Raymond Westbrook and Gary M. Beckman (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2003), 23 n. 17.) Her objections to these assumptions are that they ignore the historical context of the individual texts, which results in the assumption that each text represents a certain legal phenomenon. See Martha T. Roth, "Reading Mesopotamian Law Cases. PBS 5 100: A Question of Filiation," JESHO 44 (2001): 244-250, 281. Instead, she argues that documents of practice should be read as narratives; from studying exemplars, she believes that legal, social, and cultural norms will be revealed. See Roth: 250-256. The intent of the present project is not to reconstruct “Old Babylonian law” nor to read texts as narratives in order to reveal legal norms; rather, it focuses on the use of dress in the affirmation of or altering of identity in legal documents. 69 The Code of Hammurabi §128 states: “If a man takes a wife, but does not draw up her contract, that woman is not a wife.” This text seems to imply that this woman lacks the identity of wife under the law; the implication of this would be that she has no legal rights and responsibilities. While we have no information about this hypothetical woman, one can imagine a situation in which she had been functioning socially as a wife, and may have even continued to do so.


71 E.g., OLA 21 24. See Ibid., 370.

72 van der Toorn, 26.
out that the *awālum* (which he translates as “gentleman”\(^{73}\)) and the *awīlum* (“lady”) were expected to behave according to certain expected standards of decency.\(^ {74}\) A *muškēnum*, in contrast to an *awālum*, was “common” in his behavior.\(^ {75}\) While the *wardum*, or slave, made up part of the lower class, other economically and socially disadvantaged individuals (e.g. unskilled laborers, prostitutes, prisoners of war) also made up the lower class.\(^ {76}\) Although the Code of Hammurabi invites all who are wronged to come in order to receive justice, it specifies different penalties, depending on the social status of the individuals involved. For example, §6 specifies that stealing an ox, a sheep, a donkey, a pig or a boat carries a thirtyfold penalty if the owner is the god or the palace, but only a tenfold penalty if the owner is a *muškēnum*. In §138-139, an *awīlum* must pay three times as much as a *muškēnum* as a divorce settlement. §196-214, which deal with personal injury, set different penalties, depending on the social status of both the perpetrator and the victim. Similarly, a physician’s fee, as well as the penalty he pays for either injuring or killing his patient, depends on whether the patient is an *awīlum*, a *muškēnum*, or a *wardum* (§215-223).

A person’s legal and social identity must also be understood within the context of the Old Babylonian institutions of the city and the family. While the temple of the city god was usually located on the highest point in the city,\(^ {77}\) minor temples and shrines to other deities were located throughout the various neighborhoods.\(^ {78}\) Van der Toorn suggests that the god that a family had a particular devotion to likely had a shrine or sanctuary in the neighborhood in which the family lived.\(^ {79}\) People who practiced the same profession also tended to live in the same neighborhood,\(^ {80}\) as did the family, perhaps the most basic unit of identity.\(^ {81}\) Being a member of a family brought both legal rights and obligations. The Code of Hammurabi specifies in §117-118 that a wife, son, or daughter may only be given into debt service for three years, but a slave can be given for a longer time or even sold in order to pay the debt. Extended families could live in the

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\(^ {74}\) van der Toorn, *Family Religion in Babylonia, Syria, and Israel*, 27.

\(^ {75}\) Ibid., 28.

\(^ {76}\) Ibid., 29.


\(^ {79}\) van der Toorn, *Family Religion in Babylonia, Syria, and Israel*, 79.


\(^ {81}\) van der Toorn, *Family Religion in Babylonia, Syria, and Israel*, 20.
same, nearby or even adjacent houses.\textsuperscript{82} Legally, since land was owned by the family, witnesses to the sale of a portion of family lands were usually related to the seller,\textsuperscript{83} or at least lived in the same neighborhood.\textsuperscript{84} A family also belonged to a \textit{kimtum} (clan), which could be spread out over several cities.\textsuperscript{85} Members of the clan were obligated to help each other if called upon to do so.\textsuperscript{86}

1.2.3 Identity in Ritual Contexts

Rites of passage are rituals that mark an individual’s transition from one stage to another in the life cycle (e.g. birth, puberty, marriage, death). While these rituals are loosely linked to the corresponding biological process, C. Bell notes that “they frequently depict a sociocultural order that overlays the natural biological order without being identical to it.”\textsuperscript{87} Thus, the biological order is subordinated to the social; it is the community that confers and recognizes the new status or identity of the individual.\textsuperscript{88} A. van Gennep, who first articulated the concept of “rites of passage,” saw them as a three-stage process, in which an individual leaves behind one social group or identity, passes through a stage of no identity, and is incorporated into a new social group with a new identity.\textsuperscript{89}

In Mesopotamia, one would expect individuals to undergo identity transformations through rituals at birth, marriage, and death. At birth, the newborn goes from being ungendered to gendered; at marriage, the individual goes from being single to married; at death, the person transitions from being among the living to being among the dead.

1.3 Goals of the Study

The present study uses a philological analysis of the various items of dress mentioned in the relevant texts to discern what these items of dress are communicating about an individual’s identity (dress as material object approach) in order to utilize the concept of the use of dress in the active construction of identity, and argues that it is a


\textsuperscript{83} van der Toorn, \textit{Family Religion in Babylonia, Syria, and Israel}, 25.


\textsuperscript{85} van der Toorn, \textit{Family Religion in Babylonia, Syria, and Israel}, 22.

\textsuperscript{86} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{87} Catherine M. Bell, \textit{Ritual: Perspectives and Dimensions} (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 94.

\textsuperscript{88} Ibid.

productive means for reading and understanding the full spectrum of texts in ancient Mesopotamia by examining the usage of dress in different types of texts from the Old Babylonian period: literary, legal, and ritual contexts. Examining all of the relevant texts in these genres is beyond the scope of this study; instead, selected individual texts or groups of texts have been chosen as case studies. First, the act of dressing or undressing plays a key role in the literary tradition. This chapter takes “Inana’s Descent” as its focus and examines the use of dress by Inana and others to take on certain identities, and the implications of these identities for understanding the text. Second, dress can be used in legal texts to alter legal identity. This chapter examines the use of the hem of the garment in the legal texts. Third, in the ritual tradition, dress can be used to alter an individual’s identity at various points in the life cycle, such as birth and death. These test cases demonstrate that identity in Mesopotamia was not fixed; rather, different facets of identity could be revealed or altered by the use of dress.
CHAPTER 2

DRESS AND IDENTITY IN LITERARY CONTEXTS:
“INANA’S DESCENT TO THE NETHERWORLD”

2.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I argue that identity, as expressed through dress, is crucial in understanding the literary composition “Inana’s Descent to the Netherworld.” Dress plays an important role in the formation of identity in the literary tradition, particularly in texts about Inana. In “Inana and Ebih,” Inana, angered by the mountain Ebih’s failure to show respect to her, dresses in a terrifying martial outfit in preparation for battle.90 In several of the Dumuzi-Inana love songs, Inana carefully dresses herself in preparation for her meeting with Dumuzi.91 Outside of the Inana texts, dress also figures prominently in “Adapa and the South Wind.” Adapa, angered that the South Wind has capsized his boat, breaks its wing. When he is summoned to heaven to answer for his actions, Enki advises him to disguise himself as a mourner in order to gain the favor of Dumuzi and Gizzida. He is also advised to refuse the food and water he will be offered, but to accept the garment and oil for anointing.92 In the Sumerian composition “Gilgameš, Enkidu, and

90 For a translation of this text, see Attinger: 168-181. For an electronic edition of this text, see “Inana and Ebih” (ETCSL no. 1.3.2) http://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk/cgi-bin/etcsl.cgi?text=c.1.3.2&display=Crit&charenc=gcirc#.
92 For a transliteration, translation, and commentary of this text, see Shlomo Izre’el, Adapa and the South Wind: Language Has the Power of Life and Death, ed. Jerrold S. Cooper, MC 10 (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2001), 9-46. This text is known from various Akkadian versions; the earliest fragment that Izre’el publishes is from the
the Netherworld,” Enkidu is warned not to dress in a clean garment, lest he be recognized as not belonging in the netherworld.\textsuperscript{93}

In the Sumerian literary text “Inana’s Descent to the Netherworld,” which comes to us in multiple versions\textsuperscript{94} from the Old Babylonian period, approximately 1800 BC.,\textsuperscript{95} identity as constructed through dress plays a key role in understanding various aspects of the text. Inana puts on several items of dress in preparation for her visit to the Netherworld. In putting on various items of dress, Inana expresses her identity as a high-ranking goddess of queenly status, along with her identity as a goddess of sex and war. Inana’s intention is to push the boundaries of her identity by attempting to usurp Ereškigal’s place as the queen of the Netherworld. Since she is clearly not wearing mourning, it is obvious that she has lied about her intention to attend the funeral of her brother-in-law. Before she leaves, Inana gives instructions to her vizier, Ninšúubur, for obtaining help in case her plans go awry. Ereškigal is worried that Inana may succeed in her attempt to become the queen of the Netherworld, so she tricks Inana into removing one item of dress at each of the seven gates of the Netherworld, so that she arrives there naked, and without her identity (as a queen and as the goddess of war and sex). Without this identity, Inana’s actions in attempting to make herself queen of the Netherworld are inappropriate;\textsuperscript{96} as a result, she is judged and left as a lifeless corpse, without her

Amarna period. A. Cavigneaux and F. Al-Rawi, however, have noted that there is a Sumerian version of this text from the Old Babylonian period, which seems to parallel the Akkadian versions, although it appears to contain a much longer (but incompletely preserved) introduction and a conclusion that is “incantation-like”. See Antoine Cavigneaux and Farouk Al-Rawi, "New Sumerian Literary Texts from Tell Haddad (Ancient Meturan): A First Survey," \textit{Iraq} 55 (1993): 92-93. This text, however, remains unpublished to date.

\textsuperscript{93} For a transliteration and translation of this text, see Alhena Gadotti, “Gilgameš, Enkidu, and the Netherworld’ and the Sumerian Gilgameš Cycle” (Ph.D. diss., The Johns Hopkins University, 2005), 282ff. For an electronic edition of this text, see “Gilgameš, Enkidu and the nether world” (ETCSL no. 1.8.1.4) \url{http://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk/cgi-bin/etcsl.cgi?text=c.1.8.1.4&display=Crit&charenc=gcirc#}.

\textsuperscript{94} More than 40 copies of this text have been found. For the sigla used in referring to the texts, see Appendix 1.

\textsuperscript{95} The Akkadian version of this text, known as “Ištar’s Descent to the Netherworld,” will not be treated here. It is clearly related, since the text is difficult to understand without knowing the Sumerian version. However, since Ištar’s act of dressing is omitted and the focus of the text is different, it would need to be treated separately.

\textsuperscript{96} The issue here is not an individual’s ability to perform a certain role, but rather the expected behavior attached to a particular identity as expressed through dress. Behavior out of keeping with the identity expressed by dress can be understood in a number of ways. First, it can be taken as a sign of mental illness. (See Erving Goffman, "The Mentally Ill and Management of Personal Front," in \textit{Dress and Identity}, ed. Mary Ellen Roach-Higgins, Joanne B. Eicher, and Kim K. P. Johnson (New York: Fairchild, 1995), 117.) Second, it might be taken as a disregard for the social situation and the others involved in that situation; thus, others may believe that the individual is behaving inappropriately. A woman wearing a bridal gown on her wedding day is expected; the
previous identity. This also explains why Enlil and Nanna refuse to help her—she has transgressed the boundaries of her identity. Ninšubur, Inana’s vizier, enlists the help of

same woman wearing the same bridal gown on almost any other occasion (e.g., a funeral) might be perceived as being mentally ill or acting inappropriately, which could provoke anger or other strong responses. For example, a recent task force studied incidents of police-on-police shootings, where one of the officers involved was either in plainclothes, undercover, or off-duty. In other words, the officer shot was not in uniform at the time, and was apparently mistaken for the perpetrator. Based on the lack of police uniform while being armed, the officer’s behavior was perceived by responding uniformed officers as threatening rather than helpful. See Christopher Stone and others, "Reducing Inherent Danger: Report of the New York State Task Force on Police-on-Police Shootings (May 27, 2010)," (New York: New York State Task Force on Police-on-Police Shootings, 2010). The out-of-uniform officer did not lack the authority or ability to act, per se; the issue was the perceived inconsistency between the identity expressed through dress and the officer’s actions. Thus, a person is expected to act in keeping with his or her identity as expressed through dress; either dressing inappropriately for an expected identity or acting inappropriately based on one’s identity as expressed through dress can lead to negative or even disastrous social interactions. On the other hand, dressing in keeping with a particular identity can give (at least the perception of) authority to act in a certain way. But is this also the case in Old Babylonian Mesopotamia? While it will be argued that this is the case in “Inana’s Descent,” the clearest evidence comes from the later periods. A late Babylonian text, BM 26472, known as Chronicle 20 (Chronicle of Early Kings) describes in lines 31-36 how Erra-imitti, a king of the 1st Dynasty of Isin, installed a gardener named Enlil-bani on the throne as a substitute king and placed a royal crown on his head. When Erra-imitti died, Enlil-bani, who had apparently been acting as king, kept the throne. The same narrative also appears in BM 96152 lines 1-7. Here, it seems that the wearing of the royal crown and being seated on the throne gave Enlil-bani the identity as king, which he kept after the accidental death of Erra-imitti. For a transliteration and translation of these texts, see A. K. Grayson, Assyrian and Babylonian Chronicles, TCS 5 (Locust Valley, NY: J.J. Augustin, 1975), 152-155. Various letters written to Esarhaddon, king of Assyria, also shed light on the phenomenon of the substitute king. The substitute king was installed on the throne, took the evil of the omen on himself in place of the king, and was subsequently killed. These letters were published by S. Parpola. See Simo Parpola, Letters from Assyrian and Babylonian Scholars, SAA 10 (Helsinki: Helsinki University Press, 1993), no. 2, 3, 4, 12, 189, 219, 229, 221, 314, 350, 351. One letter, ABL 653 lines 9-13, specifically mentions garments and other items of dress for the statue of the substitute king, a necklace and a scepter. See Parpola, no. 189. This suggests that dress played a role in making the substitute king into the king, at least for a short period of time. The idea of a king needing to wear appropriate attire appears in the late literary tradition as well. In lines 247-272 Tablet XI of the Standard Babylonian “Epic of Gilgameš,” Uta-napištim has Ur-šanabi, the boatman, wash Gilgameš, remove his hides and dress him instead in a royal robe befitting his dignity, and have him return to his city to rule once again. For an edition of this text, see A. R. George, The Babylonian Gilgamesh Epic. Introduction, Critical Edition and Cuneiform Texts., vol. 1 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 702-725.
Enki, the god of wisdom and magic, to rescue Inana. Enki makes and sends two creatures down to the Netherworld, who trick Ereškigal into giving them Inana’s corpse, which they subsequently bring back to life. Finally, when Inana is allowed to leave on the condition that she provides a substitute for herself, she hands over her lover, Dumuzi, who alone has failed to dress in the identity of a mourner.

Previous scholars who have examined Inana’s dress have focused on its symbolic value, proposing that it symbolizes either her sexuality or her powers. These scholars argue that Ereškigal feared Inana’s powers, and thus tricked Inana into removing them. While this semiotic approach can yield some valuable results, it cannot reflect the entire picture. Inana is required to remove one item at each of the seven gates of the Netherworld, but since she puts on nine different items, when she finally arrives at the Netherworld, she would still have some of her powers. While all versions of the text list the same items, each text lists the items she puts on and takes off in a different order, and none of them agree as to which items of dress she left on.

See Tables 3-5 below. (For an explanation of the sigla used in Tables 3-5, see Appendix A.)

Table 3: Order of items of dress that Inana puts on

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C1</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>E</th>
<th>Ur a</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>[tu₂šu-gur-ra]</td>
<td>[tu₂šu-gur-ra]</td>
<td>[tu₂šu-gur-ra]</td>
<td>[tu₂šu-gur-ra]</td>
<td>[tu₂šu-gur-ra]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>[hi-li]</td>
<td>[hi-li]</td>
<td>hi-li</td>
<td>hi-li</td>
<td>hi-li</td>
<td>[hi-li]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>[tu-di-tum]</td>
<td>[na₄nu]nuz tab-ba</td>
<td>na₄za-gin₃</td>
<td>tu₂pala₃</td>
<td>[na₄za-&lt;gin₃&gt;]</td>
<td>[tu-di-tum]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>[tu₂pala₃]</td>
<td>na₄za-gin₃</td>
<td>na₄[nunuz] tab-ba</td>
<td>tu-di-tum</td>
<td>[na₄nunuz tab-ba]</td>
<td>[še]m-bi[zid]?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>har kug-sig₁₇</td>
<td>tu-di-tum</td>
<td>har kug-sig₁₇</td>
<td>[har] kug-sig₁₇</td>
<td>tu₂pala₃</td>
<td>har kug-sig₁₇</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>na₄za-gin₃</td>
<td>tu₂pala₃</td>
<td>[na₄za-gin₃]</td>
<td>šembi</td>
<td>[na₄]nunuz tab-ba</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>[na₄ nunuz tab]-ba</td>
<td>[šembi]</td>
<td>tu₂pala₃</td>
<td>[na₄]nunuz tab-ba</td>
<td>tu-di-da</td>
<td>(no other items)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>[šembi]</td>
<td>(broken)</td>
<td>[šembi]</td>
<td>(not preserved)</td>
<td>har kug-sig₁₇</td>
<td>(no other items)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>[gi-diš-nindan/eš₂]-gana₂</td>
<td>(broken)</td>
<td>(broken)</td>
<td>(not preserved)</td>
<td>[gi-diš-nindan/eš₂]-gana₂</td>
<td>(no other items)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For example, see William R. Sladek, “Inanna’s Descent to the Netherworld” (Ph.D. diss., The Johns Hopkins University, 1974), 84-85; Dina Katz, “Inanna’s Descent and Undressing the Dead as a Divine Law,” ZA 85 (1995): 224.

As originally noted by Sladek, 71-75.
Table 4: Order of items of dress that Inana puts on (as reported to Ereškigal)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>C2</th>
<th>L</th>
<th>Si 1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>šu-gur-ra</td>
<td>(not preserved)</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>hi-li</td>
<td>(not preserved)</td>
<td>hi-[li?]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>gi-diš-nindan / eš₂-gana₂</td>
<td>[na₄za-gin₃]</td>
<td>n[a₄]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>na₄za-gin₃</td>
<td>[na₄]nunuz tab-ba</td>
<td>(broken)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>na₄nunuz tab-ba</td>
<td>[tug]pala₃</td>
<td>(broken)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>har kug-sig₁₇</td>
<td>šembi</td>
<td>(broken)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>tu-di-tum</td>
<td>tu-di-da</td>
<td>(broken)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>šembi-z[i]</td>
<td>har kug-sig₁₇</td>
<td>(broken)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>šu-pala₃</td>
<td>gi-diš-nindan / eš₂-gana₂</td>
<td>(broken)</td>
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<td>Case</td>
<td>(O)</td>
<td>(N)</td>
<td>(K)</td>
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<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5: Order of items of distress that are removed from Innaa

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- 25
Recently, P. Delnero has done a study on variations in Sumerian literary texts. As Delnero notes, since many duplicates of literary texts were likely produced in the context of scribal education, the content of the texts was presumably relatively fixed, which would mean that there was a constraint on acceptable variation in literary texts. The wide range of variation in the various exemplars of “Inana’s Descent” suggests that it is the act of dressing and undressing and the items themselves that are important, not the order in which she puts on or removes the items. Furthermore, she actually succeeds in pushing Ereškigal off of her throne and sitting down on it, so she cannot have lost many, if any, of her powers that Ereškigal is supposed to have feared. Thus, the reason Ereškigal tricked Inana into removing her dress cannot be to remove her powers.

I suggest that Inana is actively constructing her identity as she dresses, and her identity is systematically deconstructed as she goes through each of the seven gates of the Netherworld. But what is this identity? Inana, the Mesopotamian goddess of sex and war, is one of the most complicated deities in the Mesopotamian pantheon. While I believe it can be shown that Inana was constructing her identity in all its fullness and complexity, it is her identity as a queenly warrior of high status that explains her attempt to forcibly seize what she would have considered to be her rightful position as ruler of the Netherworld. The deconstruction of this identity through the removal of her dress is what causes her attempt to take over the Netherworld to fail.


100 Inana’s identity as the goddess of sex plays a less important role in this text, unlike in the Akkadian version, “Ištar’s Descent,” where procreation stops after Ištar is trapped in the netherworld. Many scholars believe that sex is somehow inimical to the netherworld. For example, see Sladek, 22. However, it does not seem to be the case in this text. Inana’s stated excuse for coming to the netherworld is to attend the funeral of the husband of her sister Ereškigal (lines 85-89). Ereškigal is called “the child-bearing mother” (line 230). Since Ereškigal had both a husband and children, it is unlikely that sex is forbidden in the netherworld. The issue may be rather that Inana is accustomed to using sex to get her own way; since she is stripped of this aspect of her identity as she enters the various gates of the netherworld, she cannot use it as a tool to manipulate anyone. (For an example of Inana using sex to get her own way, see HS 1879. This text, which may be from either Middle Babylonian or Neo-Babylonian Nippur, has a colophon that attributes it to the year Hammurabi became king. In this text, Ištar, the Akkadian version of Inana, uses all of the young men of the city to satisfy her own sexual desires. For an edition of this text of this text, see Wolfram von Soden, "Ein spät-altbabylonisches pārum-Preislied für Ištar," *OrNS* 60 (1991): 340-341.) Furthermore, as Inana leaves the netherworld, she is accompanied by two galla-demons, who are to bring back her substitute. The galla-demons do not do many of the things normal humans do, such as eating or drinking (lines 297-299 and 361-363), but most importantly, they do not engage in sex (lines 301 and 364). Thus, Inana cannot exert influence or control over the galla-demons by using sex.
2.2 Inana’s Dress: Putting on Her Identity

In this section, I do a detailed philological analysis of the items of dress that Inana puts on. An examination of who puts on these items of dress, and in which contexts, will show what aspect of identity these items convey (dress as material object approach). The fact that Inana is described as putting on each of these items suggests that she is deliberately constructing a specific identity for herself (dress used in the active construction of identity approach). I argue that this includes both her queenly status as a high-ranking goddess and two of her major spheres of influence: war and sex. (Note that her aspect as Venus, the morning and evening star, is not part of Inana’s identity that she expresses through her dress. This omission is relevant, and will be discussed in section 2.2.3 below.)

2.2.1 tugšu-gur-ra (“turban”)

The tugšu-gur-ra or turban,¹⁰¹ a length of cloth that was wrapped around the head, is closely associated with goddesses, in particular Inana, and demonstrates her

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¹⁰¹ Other types of turbans are associated with goddesses (in particular, Inana) and women in general. For example, take the tugšu-bar-si (Akkadian paršigu), which appears in LB 1090, an unprovenanced Old Babylonian list of the clothing and adornment belonging to Ištar, the Akkadian name for Inana. (For a transliteration and translation of this text, see W. F. Leemans, *Ishtar of Lagaba and Her Dress* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1952), 1-2. LB 1090 includes both the old items that Ištar already had and the new items Ištar was to receive. This list includes several of the same items that Inana puts on in “Inana’s Descent,” including the tudittum (Akkadian tudittum) (obv. 5 and 12). In addition to the six woolen turbans and four linen turbans that she already owned (obv.16-17), she received an additional six woolen turbans and two linen turbans (rev. 14-15). However, this turban may also be one of Inana’s well-known emblems. Although scholars have traditionally thought of it as a bundle of reeds, textual evidence from as far back as the Early Dynastic period and as late as the Neo-Babylonian period identifies Inana’s emblem as a turban tied to a pole. For the Early Dynastic evidence, P. Steinkeller uses a literary composition about Ama’ušum(galana), which exists in three versions, two from Ebla (ARET 5 20 + A. Archi, QS 18 (1992) 36-37 (pls. 7-8); ARET 5 21 + Archi, Or. NS 58 (1989) 125 + QS 18, pp. 38-39 (pls. 9-10)) and one from Abu Salabikh (OIP 99 278). He argues first that the great urim emblems set up at the temple of Inana are parallel to the great spires set up at Kulaba in the following line. He then suggests that these two lines describe the lapis lazuli bar-si around the neck of Inana in the previous line. See Piotr Steinkeller, "Inanna’s Archaic Symbol," in *Written on Clay and Stone: Ancient Near Eastern Studies Presented to Krystyna Szarzynska on the Occasion of her 80th Birthday*, ed. Jan Braun et al. (Warsaw: Agade, 1998), 90-92. For the Neo-Babylonian evidence, P.-A. Beaulieu describes two texts from Uruk (YOS 7, 183 and PTS 2282) that mention a turban (paršigu) for the divine standard of the lady of Uruk (Ištar). See Paul-Alain Beaulieu, "The Turbaned Standard of Ištar," in *Written on Clay and Stone: Ancient Near Eastern Studies Presented to Krystyna Szarzynska on the Occasion of her 80th Birthday*, ed. Jan Braun et al. (Warsaw: Agade, 1998), 25-26. This further supports the idea of a turban...
queenly status. It may also appear in “Inana and Enki” line 2, where it is reconstructed as the item that Inana puts on, based on the similarity of the line to lines 17, 105, and 130 of “Inana’s Descent.” It is also found in an Ur III text among a list of precious items delivered for Inana, fashioned of both lapis lazuli and cornelian instead of the usual cloth. In the same text, it is made of cornelian and delivered for both Nanaya, who is closely associated with Inana, and Inana of Zabala, who is considered to be a local form of Inana. While the turban appears in other lists of precious objects from the Ur III period, its use or recipient is not stated. In the text, the turban is further qualified as *men eden-na*, “the crown of the steppe.” The *men eden-na* is also associated with Hammurabi. Since neither Inana nor Hammurabi is normally associated with the steppe, it is unclear why either of them would have a “crown of the steppe.” To get around this difficulty, scholars have proposed various solutions. One suggestion is to read *EDIN* as *din₂*; *din₂* would be a phonetic reading for *tan₂*, “bright,” or perhaps *dan₂*, “pure.” According to this line of thinking, a “bright” or “pure” crown would fit being closely associated with Inana’s identity as this symbol is used to represent Inana in the iconographic record.

A turban is also an important accessory for the well-dressed Mesopotamian upper-class woman, as evidenced, for example, by an Old Babylonian dowry text, BM 16465, which records that Narubtum, the daughter of Ikun-pî-Sîn, receives a total of 42 turbans, but only 24 garments. For a transliteration and translation of this text, see Stephanie Dalley, *Old Babylonian Dowries,* *Iraq* 42 (1980): 69-72.

P. Steinkeller (1998: 92) notes that while the *bar-si* is normally a garment worn by women, it is also made for kings. It is unlikely that this is the case, however. The example that he cites from PSD B p. 126 reads *ṭug₂bar-si₂šar₃* “second-quality sashes for the king’ Barton Haverford, pl. 43 no. 68 i9.” This is an Ur III text from Girsu (Telloh). It is better, however, to read instead *diš₂bar-si₂šar₃* “1 next-to-royal quality (second-quality) turban.” For a photograph and transliteration of this tablet, see http://cdli.ucla.edu/P109946 The term *us₂šar₃* is a designation for the second quality (in a series of five) that was used from approximately Šulgi 27(Hartmut Waetzoldt, *Untersuchungen zur neusumerischen Textilindustrie* (Rome: Centro per le Antichita e la Storia dell’Arte del Vicino Oriente, 1972), 47.)

102 PBS I/1 Pl. 1 Obv. i 2. For a transliteration and translation of this text, see Gertrud Farber-Flügge, *Der Mythos "Inanna und Enki" unter besonderer Berücksichtigung der Liste der me* (Rome: Biblical Institute Press, 1973), 16ff. For an electronic edition of this text, see “Inana and Enki” line 2 (ETCSL no. 1.3.1) http://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk/cgi-bin/etcsl.cgi?text=c.1.3.1&display=Crit&charenc=gcirc#.

103 AAICAB 1/1, pl. 043-044, 1911-240, obv. ii 10.
104 AAICAB 1/1, pl. 043-044, 1911-240, obv. ii 13.
105 AAICAB 1/1, pl. 043-044, 1911-240, rev. iii 1.
106 ITT 2, 93 obv 7; MVN 4, 147 obv 2; TCL 5, 6044 obv i 18; TCL 5, 6055 rev i 9
107 For a transliteration and translation of the text, TCL XVI 61, see “A prayer to Enki for Hammu-râbi (Hammu-râbi B)” line 1 (ETCSL no. 2.8.2.2) http://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk/cgi-bin/etcsl.cgi?text=c.2.8.2.2&display=Crit&charenc=gcirc#. See also Johannes J.A. van Dijk, "L'hymne à Marduk avec intercession pour le roi Abî'êshuh," *MIO* 12 (1966): 64-65.
108 As suggested by Ibid.: 64 n. 17.
both contexts better. While these suggestions are attractive, they are also problematic as well. First, all of the versions of the text use the EDIN sign; if the phonetic reading were intended, it would be unusual for all of the texts to use the phonetic reading rather than the more usual sign. Second, the reading tan₂ does not appear to be applied to clothing in other Old Babylonian literary contexts. Third, while the reading dan₂ is applied to garments, the contexts suggest that dan₂ is better translated “clean” rather than “pure.” Thus, it seems better to keep the translation “crown of the steppe,” even if the association with Inana and Hammurabi is unclear. However, since the Hammurabi text further qualifies the men eden-na as nam-lugal-la, “of kingship,” it clearly associates the “crown of the steppe” with royalty.

Thus, although turbans are generally worn by goddesses, it is most closely associated with Inana, and may be taken as indicative of her divine identity. Since the turban that Inana dons in this text is qualified as men eden-na, however, it emphasizes her queenly status.

2.2.2 hi-li

Another item that Inana puts on is a hi-li, usually translated as “wig” or “locks (of hair).” Rather than a wig, however, I suggest that it is a type of headdress or ornament, and that it emphasizes three aspects of Inana’s identity—her royal status and her identity as a goddess of sex and war.

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109 For example, in the text “Gilgameš, Enkidu, and the Netherworld,” in line 185 Gilgameš advises Enkidu not to dress in a clean garment (tug₂ dan₂-dan₂); Enkidu ignores this advice and proceeds to do so in line 207. For the most recent transliteration and translation of this text, see Gadotti, 282ff. For an electronic edition of this text, see “Gilgameš, Enkidu and the nether world” (ETCSL no. 1.8.1.4)

http://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk/cgi-bin/etcsli.cgi?text=c.1.8.1.4&display=Crit&charenc=gcirc#. Another text, BM 120011 rev. line 7, refers to “the fuller who made her garments clean” (lu₂ azlag tug₂-ga-ni dan₃-dan₃-na). For an edition of this text of this text, see Klaus Wagensonner, "What is the Matter with the numun-plant? BM 120011 Reconsidered," WZKM 99 (2009): 362-367. For an electronic edition of this text, see “The šumunda grass” line 54 (ETCSL no. 1.7.7) http://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk/cgi-bin/etcsli.cgi?text=c.1.7.7&display=Crit&charenc=gcirc#.

110 For example, see Adam Falkenstein, "Zur 'Inannas Gang zur Unterwelt'," AfO 14 (1942): 115-116; Sladek, 77-78.


112 Similarly, Witzel (1945:32) suggested that the hi-li was a type of jewelry or adornment.
First, the different places on the body on which the hi-li is worn suggest that it is not a wig. Inana is said to take one on her forehead (sag-ki).\textsuperscript{113} One does not usually wear a wig on one’s forehead.\textsuperscript{114} Sladek attempts to get around this difficulty by suggesting that the hi-li could be artificial bangs,\textsuperscript{115} but the hi-li can also be worn on other places where artificial bangs would not be expected, such as the face or front (Sumerian igi).\textsuperscript{116} In “Dumuzi and Ḫeššin-ana,” Inana is commanded in line 9, “Don’t adorn your face (front) (igi) with hi-li; descend to the netherworld” (hi-li-a igi-zi la-bani-in-du₇ kur-šē ed₃-de₃).\textsuperscript{117} Only in a few places is the hi-li worn or placed on the head. Even in those instances, however, translating hi-li as “wig” seems less probable than “ornament” or “headdress.” For example, in “Enki and the World Order,” the young woman is said to put Enki’s word “on (her) head like her hi-li (so that) the people in their settled(?) cities admire (her)” (line 34: [in]im-zu ki-sikil-e hi-li-a-ni-gi₇ sag-ga₂ mu-ni-in-ğal₂; line 35: [iri₈ki] ġar-ğar-ra-bi uĝê-e u₆ mu-e).\textsuperscript{118} While “wig” would not be an impossible translation here, without further evidence that wigs were considered to make young women particularly attractive, the idea of a headdress or an ornament is more likely. Headdresses or ornaments worn by women are well attested in the archaeological record, particularly in the Old Babylonian period.\textsuperscript{119} At Ur, traces of a silver diadem were found in a grave (LG/69).\textsuperscript{120} A frontlet made of gold was found in grave LG/114,\textsuperscript{121}  

\textsuperscript{113} Lines 18 and 106. For an edition of this text, see Sladek, 103-181. For an electronic edition of this text, see “Inana’s descent to the nether world” (ETCSL no. 1.4.1) http://etsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk/cgi-bin/etcsl.cgi?text=c.1.4.1&display=Crit&charenc=gcirc#.
\textsuperscript{114} Kramer: 16; Witzel: 32.
\textsuperscript{115} Sladek, 78.
\textsuperscript{116} While igi seems to be a more general term for one’s face or front, saq-ki refers to a specific place, high on the head. In the lexical list OB Nippur Ugumu, which lists body parts from the top of the body down, “my forehead” (saq-ki-gu₁₀) is the fifth entry listed. For an electronic edition of this text of this text, see http://oracc.museum.upenn.edu/dcclt/Q002268.
\textsuperscript{117} For a transliteration and translation of this text, see Sladek, 225-239. For an electronic edition of this text, see Dumuzi and Ḫeššin-ana line 9 (ETCSL no. 1.4.1.1) http://etsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk/cgi-bin/etcsl.cgi?text=c.1.4.1.1&display=Crit&charenc=gcirc#.
\textsuperscript{118} For a transliteration and translation of this text, see Benito, 85-137. For an electronic edition of this text, see “Enki and the world order” (ETCSL no. 1.1.3) http://etsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk/cgi-bin/etcsl.cgi?text=c.1.1.3&display=Crit&charenc=gcirc#.
\textsuperscript{119} The most famous example, although from an earlier period, is Queen Puabi’s headdress from the Royal Cemetery of Ur. Woolley described a gold hair-ribbon, various wreaths of lapis lazuli and cornelian beads with pendants of beach leaves or willow leaves, and gold hair rings. See C. L. Woolley, The Royal Cemetery, Ur Excavations II (London and Philadelphia: Trustees of the British Museum and the Museum of the University of Pennsylvania, 1934), 84-85.
\textsuperscript{120} Barrelet: 201.
and a fragment of a gold frontlet was found in grave LG/182. Frontlets have also been found in graves at Tell ed-Der.\footnote{Ibid., 211.}

Second, the hi-li must be a type of headdress or ornament because it is clearly equated with crowns, not hair or wigs. In one Šulgi hymn, Šulgi is said to “put a hi-li as a crown on (his) head” (hi-li men-še₃ sag-ša₂ mi-ni-gal₂). In TLB II 3:17, Hammurabi boasts, “the head garment is given (to me); I acquired the crown of hi-li” (tug₂ sag bi₂-šum₂-ma men hi-li bi-tuk).\footnote{H. Gasche, \textit{La Babylonie au 17e siecle avant notre ère: approche archeologique, problemes et perspectives}, ed. L. de Meyer and H. Gasche, Mesopotamian History and Environment. Series II. Memoirs I. (Ghent: The University of Ghent, 1989a), 50-51.}

Third, in “Inana’s Descent,” Inana always takes the hi-li after she puts on the crown of the steppe (men eden-na). These two items, listed first, are the only ones that appear consistently in order in the text. There is no agreement among the various manuscripts about the order in which she puts on the other items.\footnote{For an edition of this text of this text, see Jacob Klein, \textit{Three Šulgi Hymns: Sumerian Royal Hymns Glorifying King Šulgi of Ur} (Ramat-Gan: Bar-Ilan University Press, 1981), 136-145. For an electronic edition of this text, see “A praise poem of Šulgi (Šulgi X)” line 10 (ETCSL no. 2.4.2.24) \url{http://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk/cgi-bin/etcsl.cgi?text=c.2.4.2.24&display=Crit&charenc=gcirc#.}

Fourth, the object usually described as a “diorite stone wig”\footnote{For a transliteration and translation of this text, see Åke W. Sjöberg, “Ein Selbstpreis des Königs Hammurapi von Babylon,” \textit{ZA} 54 (1961): 51-53.} (BM 91075), may not actually be a wig, per se, but rather an ornament or headdress. See Figure 1.

\footnote{As first noted by Sladek, 71. See also Figure 1 below.}
There has been no scholarly disagreement with Sladek’s assertion that the inscription on the object, which states that Baba-ninam, the cupbearer of Ur-Ningirsu, “fashioned her hi-li of femininity for her” (hi-li nam-munus-ka-ni mu-na-dim₂), proves that a hi-li must be a wig.¹²⁹ However, the inscription is written on what appears to be a headband or ornament of some type, not the “hair” itself. Granted, the headband or ornament is more convenient for inscribing, since it lacks the wavy lines indicating hair. J. Wiseman notes that the scoring on the underside of this object indicates that it was intended to be used on an actual statue, not as an independent object.¹³⁰ While the actual statue for which this object was intended has not been found, Wiseman includes a photo of a statue of a goddess that could have worn a similar object.¹³¹ He notes that the statue’s flat top and the three holes in the back indicate that a similar object would have been placed there.¹³² An examination of the photo reveals that the lower part of the statue’s “hair” was carved as part of the main statue itself. This suggests that the “hair” part of the

¹²⁹ Sladek, 77-78.
¹³⁰ Wiseman: 168 n. 25.
¹³¹ Ibid.: Pl. XXIic.
¹³² Ibid.: 168.
diorite object was considered as part of the main statue, not as part of the dedicatory object. In other words, one way to dedicate an ornament or headdress that did not cover the entire top of the head (which was made of stone) to the statue of a deity (which has a flat top) to wear on its head would have been to have the ornament or headdress connected to the upper portion of the statue’s hair. Since, as we have seen in section 2.2.1 above, during the Ur III period (the statue of ) Inana received turbans (šu-gur-ra) made of both lapis lazuli and cornelian, it is entirely plausible that the goddess Lama could receive a headdress or ornament made out of diorite, such as this object, rather than a wig.

The larger question, however, is what wearing a hi-li tells us about Inana’s identity. I argue that it is an expression of her identity as the goddess of sex, of her royal status, and possibly of her warlike aspect.

133 Wiseman also includes a photo of a headdress (Pl. XXIIa), also intended to be attached to a statue, which covers the entire top of the head, making it unnecessary to portray the top portion of the statue’s hair.
134 While it would be possible for dedicatory ornaments to be made out of textiles or other perishable materials, these would not have been preserved in the archaeological record.
135 Some scholars point out that the hi-li is also associated with the gudug-priest. See Pascal Attinger and Manfred Krebernik, "L’Hymne à Hedursaqa (Hendursaga A)," in Von Sumer bis Homer: Festschrift für Manfred Schretter zum 60. Geburtstag am 25. Februar 2004, ed. Robert Rollinger, AOAT 325 (Münster: Ugarit-Verlag, 2005), 66. I would argue that the hi-li in question in these texts refers not to the hi-li meaning “sex appeal” or “ornament” (or “wig,” as per Attinger and Krebernik) but to a third hi-li, which appears to be a place in a temple. Consider the examples: gudug hi-li-a bi2-in-gub-bu-ne (“Hendursaga A” Line 76). Attinger and Krebernik translate this line as “they place the wig on (the head of the) gudug-priest.” However, the locative –a on the word hi-li makes this translation difficult. A better translation would be “they place the gudug-priest in the hi-li.” In the other examples, the hi-li as a place in a temple also makes better sense. In “The Lament over the Destruction of Ur,” in line 347, “its gudug-priest no longer stands in the hi-li” (gudug-bi hi-li-a ba-ra-mu-un-gub). (For a transliteration and translation of this text, see W. H. Ph. Römer, Die Klage über die Zerstörung von Ur, AOAT 309 (Münster: Ugarit-Verlag, 2004), 10-105. For an electronic edition of this text, see “The lament for Urim” line 348 (ETCSL no. 2.2.2) http://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk/cgi-bin/etcsl.cgi?text=c.2.2.2&display=Crit&charenc=gcirc#.)

This line appears in the context of other cult personnel who no longer perform certain cultic duties. “Gilgameš and Huwawa A”, line 174b (gudug dabs-š3-hi-li-še3 gur-ra) and “Gilgameš and Huwawa B” line 154 (gudug dabs-ba hi-li-še3 gur-ra-am3) mimic the sense of the line in “The Lament over the Destruction of Ur” in that they talk about impossibilities—in this case, a captured gudug-priest returned to the hi-li. (For a transliteration and translation of “Gilgameš and Huwawa A”, see Dietz Otto Edzard, "Gilgameš und Huwawa A. I. Teil," ZA 80 (1990): 183-190; Dietz Otto Edzard, "Gilgameš und Huwawa A. II. Teil," ZA 81 (1991): 167-232. For an electronic edition of this text, see “Gilgameš and Huwawa A”, line 174B (ETCSL no. 1.8.1.5) http://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk/cgi-
I suggest that the wearing of **hi-li** affirms Inana’s identity as the goddess of sex for two reasons. First, it appears to be related to the Sumerian word **hi-li**, usually translated as “sex appeal,” whose definition is known because of its equation with the Akkadian word **kuzbu** in the lexical tradition. It is possible that “ornament” was the primary meaning of **hi-li**, and it came to have a secondary meaning of “ornament that makes one (sexually) attractive” and thus “sex appeal.” This second meaning is also clear in the literary texts. In “Enlil and Sud,” **hi-li** is one of the words used to describe Sud, and appears to be one of the reasons that Enlil chooses her. Note that the verbal form of **hi-li** is used to describe what Enlil does to Sud in bed after their marriage. One of the **me** that Inana steals from Enki is **hi-li**: **hi-li nam-munus-e-ne ba-e-de** “you have brought with you the **hi-li** of femininity.” Here, it is clearly not an item of dress, as it is not listed among the other items of dress. While **hi-li** is used to
describe many different gods and goddesses, it is particularly characteristic of Dumuzi\textsuperscript{142} and Inana\textsuperscript{143} in the Dumuzi-Inana songs, where its sexual nature is clear. Second, wearing a \textit{hi-li} makes its wearer attractive. As mentioned earlier in this section, putting Enki’s word on her head like her \textit{hi-li} makes people admire the young woman.\textsuperscript{144} When Šulgi puts on his \textit{hi-li} before entering into Inana’s temple, it causes Inana to admire him,\textsuperscript{145} as a result, she decrees a good fate for him.\textsuperscript{146} Thus, by taking a \textit{hi-li} for her forehead, Inana is emphasizing her identity as a goddess of sex.

The second aspect of Inana’s identity that is emphasized by her \textit{hi-li} is her high queenly status. Kings, such as Šulgi\textsuperscript{147} and Hammurabi\textsuperscript{148} wear a \textit{hi-li}. Šulgi is also called “the \textit{hi-li} of the crown” (\textit{sag-men-na hi-li-bi}) and “the ornament of the true crown” (\textit{aga zid-da he₂-du₇-bi}).\textsuperscript{149} In this context, he has both kingly and divine status.

The third facet of Inana’s identity that is possibly underscored by her \textit{hi-li} is her warlike aspect. The other context in which a \textit{hi-li} can be worn is battle. Hammurabi wears a crown of \textit{hi-li}: “the head garment is given (to me); I acquired the crown of \textit{hi-li}”

\textsuperscript{142} For example, \textit{hi-li-zu ze₁₂-ba-am₃} (“your \textit{hi-li} is sweet”) is used as a refrain to describe Dumuzi in “Dumuzi-Inana B” lines 27-32. For an electronic edition of this text, see “A balbale to Inana and Dumuzi (Dumuzi-Inana B)” (ETCSL no. 4.08.02) \url{http://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk/cgi-bin/etcsl.cgi?text=c.4.08.02&display=Crit&charenc=gcirc#}. For a transliteration and translation of this text, see Sefati, 128-130.

\textsuperscript{143} For example, in one version of “Dumuzi-Inana R” (UM 55-21-309), \textit{hi-li} is used both to describe Inana (lines 7-8) and by Inana to describe herself (lines 9-11). For a transliteration and translation of this text, see Ibid., 236-239. For an electronic edition of this text, see “A song of Inana and Dumuzi (Dumuzi-Inana R)” Version A lines 7-8 and 9-11 (ETCSL no. 4.08.18) \url{http://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk/cgi-bin/etcsl.cgi?text=c.4.08.18&display=Crit&charenc=gcirc#}.

\textsuperscript{144} “Enki and the World Order” lines 34-35. For a transliteration and translation of this text, see Benito, 85-137. For an electronic edition of this text, see “Enki and the world order” lines 34-35 (ETCSL no. 1.1.3) \url{http://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk/cgi-bin/etcsl.cgi?text=c.1.1.3&display=Crit&charenc=gcirc#}.

\textsuperscript{145} “Šulgi X” Line 10. For a transliteration and translation of this text, see Klein, 136-145. For an electronic edition of this text, see “A praise poem of Šulgi (Šulgi X)” line 10 (ETCSL no. 2.4.2.24) \url{http://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk/cgi-bin/etcsl.cgi?text=c.2.4.2.24&display=Crit&charenc=gcirc#}.

\textsuperscript{146} “Šulgi X” lines 48ff.

\textsuperscript{147} “Šulgi X” line 10.

\textsuperscript{148} TLB II 3 line 17. For a transliteration and translation of this text, see Sjöberg, ”Ein Selbstpreis des Königs Hammurapi von Babylon,” 51-53.

\textsuperscript{149} “Šulgi D” lines 8-9. For a transliteration and translation of this text, see Klein, 72-82. For an electronic edition of this text, see “A praise poem of Šulgi (Šulgi D)” (ETCSL no. 2.4.2.04) \url{http://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk/cgi-bin/etcsl.cgi?text=c.2.4.2.04&display=Crit&charenc=gcirc#}.
(tug₂ sag bi₂-šum₂-ma men hi-li bi-tuk). The context is Hammurabi’s self-praise; in particular, his prowess in battle is stressed.

Thus, when Inana takes a hi-li for her forehead, her identity as a goddess of sex and war, as well as her high queenly status, is highlighted.

2.2.3 tug₂-pala₃ (pala-garment), šembi (kohl), na₃-za-gin₃ di₄-di₄-la₂ (small lapis lazuli beads), and har kug-sig₁₇ (gold ring)

In addition to the hi-li, Inana puts on four items before going to the Netherworld: the pala-garment, kohl, small lapis lazuli beads, and a gold ring (bracelet). I propose that both the individual items of dress as well as the combination of them express her full identity—her royal status as a high-ranking goddess, and her identity as the goddess of sex and war. These four items also appear in the Dumuzi-Inana texts, where Inana’s act of dressing is described. In four of these texts,¹⁵¹ she wears a pala-garment. In three of these four texts,¹⁵² she also wears lapis lazuli beads on her neck (described with di₄-di₄).¹⁵³ In two of these three texts, she wears kohl as well.¹⁵⁴ In one of these two texts, she wears a gold ring (bracelet) in addition.¹⁵⁵ Since the same group of four items is associated with Inana in different contexts, it seems productive to look both at what the combination of these items might be expressing about her identity, as well as looking at each item of dress individually.

One of the major arguments for seeing the combination of these items of dress as indicative of her identity as a goddess of sex is their appearance in the Dumuzi-Inana texts, which have also been called “love songs.” Although scholars have classified these songs in different ways,¹⁵⁶ it is more important to look at the specific circumstances

¹⁵⁰ TLB II 3 line 17. For a transliteration and translation of this text, see Sjöberg, "Ein Selbstpreis des Königs Hammurapi von Babylon," 51-53.
¹⁵¹ “Dumuzi-Inana C,” “P,” “C₁,” and “E₁”
¹⁵² “Dumuzi-Inana C,” “C₁,” and “E₁”
¹⁵³ “Dumuzi-Inana C”, as in “Inana’s Descent”
¹⁵⁴ “Dumuzi-Inana C” and “E₁”
¹⁵⁵ “Dumuzi-Inana C”
¹⁵⁶ Kramer divided them according to content into three categories: 1) poems related to the courtship of Dumuzi and Inana; 2) compositions related to the so-called “Sacred Marriage Rite”; 3) cultic love songs, which may have been used during the celebration of the sacred marriage. See Samuel Noah Kramer, The Sacred Marriage Rite: Aspects of Faith, Myth, and Ritual in Ancient Sumer (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1969), 67-106. According to Kramer’s organization, of the texts in question, “Dumuzi-Inana C₁” would fall into the category of courtship (Ibid., 77), “Dumuzi-Inana P” would belong to the “Sacred Marriage Rite” (Ibid., 79-80), and “Dumuzi-Inana C” would be a cultic love song (Ibid., 97). “Dumuzi-Inana E₁” was not known to Kramer at that time.

Sefati (1998: 18-29), on the other hand, considered them cultic literature, and chose to categorize them according to the subscript in the text as balbale-songs, širnamšub-songs, kunğar-songs, and tigi. Of the four songs, “Dumuzi-Inana C” and “E₁” are balbale-songs, while the subscripts are not preserved in “Dumuzi-Inana P” and “C₁”. Ibid., 22.
under which Inana dresses in these items in each of the songs rather than the literary classification of the texts. The context for these songs is the marriage between Inana and Dumuzi, and the sexual nature of their meeting is unmistakable.

The text “Dumuzi-Inana C,” which is couched as a dialogue between an unnamed “brother” and “sister,” is clearly an exchange between a “lover” and a “beloved.” Although the speakers are unidentified, most scholars think that the lovers are Dumuzi and Inana, based on similarities to other love songs in which Dumuzi and Inana are named. The sexual nature of Inana’s act of dressing is unambiguous. Inana, the bride, is bathing and dressing in preparation to meet her bridegroom, Dumuzi. Inana first proclaims her sexual maturity: she points out that “my breasts are standing up” and “hair has grown on my genitals.” While the following line is not completely understood, the reference to the “lap” (\textit{ur}_2) is a well-known metaphor for sexual intercourse. Two lines later, Inana exhorts the goddess Bau to rejoice along with her because of her...

For a more recent study on sacred marriage, see Pirjo Lapinkivi, \textit{The Sumerian Sacred Marriage in the Light of Comparative Evidence}, ed. Simo Parpola and Robert M. Whiting, SAAS 15 (Helsinki: Neo-Assyrian Text Corpus Project, 2004). Lapinkivi’s interest, however, is to compare the Mesopotamian material with evidence from other cultures; his approach is not relevant for this study.

While sometimes actual brothers and sisters address each other, such as Utu and Inana in “Dumuzi-Inana A,” here, the explicit sexual references make it clear that the “brother” and “sister” here have a sexual, not a genetic relationship. Further, the similarity in form to other love songs (e.g., the alternate use of \textit{emegir} by the male and \textit{emesal} by the female in their exchange) also strongly suggests this. See Sefati, 138-140. Another version of this text, Ni 2429 (SRT 5) 39-40 has a plural speaker (a group of female singers) speaking here. For transliterations and translations of both of these texts, see Sefati, 132-137.

The word \textit{ba-ba} is obscure. Sefati tentatively takes it as a phonetic writing for the goddess $^4\text{ba-ba}_6$, who is also mentioned in line 43. See Sefati, 149. Sefati notes that Jacobsen, following Thureau-Dangin, suggested reading $^4\text{BA.U2}$ as $^4\text{ba-ba}_6$. See Thorkild Jacobsen, \textit{The Sumerian King List} (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1939), 104-105 n. 196; F. Thureau-Dangin, \textit{Les homophones Sumeriens} (Paris: Paul Geuthner, 1929), 40. G. Marchesi argues that \textit{ba-ba} stands for $^4\text{a-ba-ba}$ or $^4\text{a-ba}_4\text{ba}_4$. See Gianni Marchesi, "On the Divine Name $^4\text{BA.Ú}$," \textit{OrNS} 71 (2002): 163. Most recently, G. Rubio has argued that $^4\text{BA.U2}$ should be read as $^4\text{ba-ba}_6$, and convincingly refutes Marchesi’s argument. See Gonzalo Rubio, "Reading Sumerian Names, I: Ensuhkešanna and Baba," \textit{JCS} 62 (2010): 35-39. As Sefati notes, however, a greater difficulty is in explaining the reference to Baba in a balbale of Inana. See Sefati, 149. In any case, regardless of how one takes the word \textit{ba-ba}, the sexual nature of the line is clear.

For example, in “Enki and Ninhursag” lines 180 and 182, Enki sleeps in the “lap” (\textit{ur}_2) of Uttu, causing her to conceive. For a transliteration and translation of this text, see Pascal Attinger, "Enki et Ninhursag,” \textit{ZA} 74 (1984): 6-31. For an electronic edition of this text, see “Enki and Ninhursag” (ETCSL no. 1.1.1) http://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk/cgi-bin/etcsl.cgi?text=c.1.1.1&display=Crit&charenc=gcirc#.
She finally concludes that it will be “sweet” or “good” for him, presumably referring to Dumuzi’s sexual enjoyment of her. In “Dumuzi-Inana P,” Inana, the bride, is also dressing in preparation to meet her bridegroom, Dumuzi. Again, the sexual character of this meeting is evident. Inana spends a significant amount of time praising her genitals in song. She goes on to ask who will “plow” (uru₄ru) her genitals for her. The answer, of course, is Dumuzi.

In “Dumuzi-Inana C1,” Inana is also getting dressed in preparation for meeting Dumuzi, her bridegroom. The text is broken, so the sexual qualities of this meeting are not as obvious. Nevertheless, the description of embracing and kissing hints at it.

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161 “Dumuzi-Inana C” line 43. For a transliteration and translation of this text, see Sefati, 132-137. For an electronic edition of this text, see “Dumuzi-Inana C” line 46 (ETCSL no. 4.08.03) http://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk/cgi-bin/etcsl.cgi?text=c.4.08.03&display=Crit&charenc=gcirc#.

162 “Dumuzi-Inana C” line 45 or “Dumuzi-Inana C” line 48 (ETCSL no. 4.08.03) http://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk/cgi-bin/etcsl.cgi?text=c.4.08.03&display=Crit&charenc=gcirc#.

163 “Dumuzi-Inana P” Column II lines 17ff. For a transliteration and translation of this text, see Sefati, 218-226. For an electronic edition of this text, see “Dumuzi-Inana P” Segment B lines 17ff (ETCSL no. 4.08.16) http://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk/cgi-bin/etcsl.cgi?text=c.4.08.16&display=Crit&charenc=gcirc#.

164 “Dumuzi-Inana P” Column II line 26 or “Dumuzi-Inana P” Segment B line 26 (ETCSL no. 4.08.16) http://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk/cgi-bin/etcsl.cgi?text=c.4.08.16&display=Crit&charenc=gcirc#.

165 “Dumuzi-Inana P” Column II lines 29-30 or “Dumuzi-Inana P” Segment B lines 29-30 (ETCSL no. 4.08.16) http://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk/cgi-bin/etcsl.cgi?text=c.4.08.16&display=Crit&charenc=gcirc#.

166 A late Babylonian version of tablet 19 of the balag-composition uru₄am₃ma-ir-ra-bi has been compared to this text. See Konrad Volk, Die Balag-Komposition úru àm-ma-ir-ra-bi: Rekonstruktion und Bearbeitung der Tafeln 18 (19’ff.), 19, 20 und 21 der späten, kanonischen Version (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner, 1989), 123. In this cult song, Inana also dresses in a pala-garment (line 68) and puts kohl on her eyes (line 70) before meeting with Ama-šumgal-ana, who is identified with Dumuzi as far back as the Early Dynastic period. (See Manfred Krebernik, "Drachenmutter und Himmelsrebe? Zur Frühgeschichte Dumuzis und seiner Familie," in Literature, Politik und Recht in Mesopotamien: Festschrift für Claus Wilcke, ed. Walther Sallaberger, Konrad Volk, and Annette Zgoll (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2003), 151-180.) Dumuzi is also identified with Ama-šumgal-ana in the Old Babylonian period. For example, the identification is clear in “Inana D” lines 66-68. (For a transliteration and translation of this text, see Hermann Behrens, Die Ninegalla-Hymne: Die Wohnungnahme Inannas in Nippur in Altabylonischer Zeit (Stuttgart: Franz Steiner, 1998), 28-41. For an electronic edition of this text, see “A hymn to Inana as Ninegala (Inana D)” lines 66-68 (ETCSL no. 4.07.4) http://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk/cgi-bin/etcsl.cgi?text=c.4.07.4&display=Crit&charenc=gcirc#.) Volk also notes that the Old Babylonian version of this text does not have these lines. He suggests that the compiler
In “Dumuzi-Inana C1,” the setting of the text is not entirely clear. While Inana is also getting dressed, there is no overt mention of her meeting Dumuzi. Nevertheless, Durtur, Dumuzi’s mother, is involved in some way. This suggests that the setting is also Inana’s and Dumuzi’s wedding.

One of the items that Inana puts on before her descent to the Netherworld, the kohl (šembi) on her eyes, is clearly intended to convey her identity as a goddess of sex whenever Inana wears it. In “Inana’s Descent” it is described as lu₂ he₂-em-du he₂-

or author of this late version might have used a number of stock phrases from Old Babylonian parallel contexts to expand the text. See Volk, 124.

167 “Dumuzi-Inana C1” Column ii line 22. For a transliteration and translation of this text, see Sefati, 286-293. For an electronic edition of this text, see “Dumuzi-Inana C1” Segment B line 22 (ETCSL no. 4.08.29) http://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk/cgi-bin/etcsl.cgi?text=c.4.08.29&display=Crit&charenc=gcirc#.

168 In different contexts, kohl (šembi) seems to have varying implications for identity. First, kohl can be used in preparation for ingratiating oneself with others in order to receive favorable treatment. For example, in line 228 of “Enki and Ninhursagā,” the fox puts kohl on his eyes before going to intervene with Ninhursagā on Enki’s behalf. For a transliteration and translation of this text, see Attinger, "Enki et Ninhursagā," 6-31. For an electronic edition of this text, see “Enki and Ninhursagā” line 230 (ETCSL no. 1.1.1) http://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk/cgi-bin/etcsl.cgi?text=c.1.1.1&display=Crit&charenc=gcirc#.

Second, kohl can honor the wearer, setting apart the wearer as one of high status. In “Lugalbanda and the Anzud Bird,” Lugalbanda paints the eyes of the Anzud chick (lines 58 and 94). The Anzud bird, flattered by what has been done for his chick, grants Lugalbanda the destiny of his choice (lines 160-202). (For a transliteration and translation of this text, see Claus Wilcke, Das Lugalbandaepos (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1969), 90-129. For an electronic edition of this text, see “Lugalbanda and the Anzud bird” (ETCSL no. 1.3.2.2) http://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk/cgi-bin/etcsl.cgi?text=c.1.8.2.2&display=Crit&charenc=gcirc#.) Mařík feels that these two uses of kohl are associated with Inana’s use of kohl in preparation for her wedding. He suggests that the fox wants to be as compelling as Inana, while Lugalbanda pursues the Anzud bird through his attentions to the Anzud chick. See Tomáš Mařík, "Sex, Religion and Antimony. Zu einer apolitischen und ahistorischen Deutung von Inana und Šukaledtuda," WZKM 93 (2003): 154. While it is true that the wearing of kohl may in general make the wearer attractive, the sexual element is lacking in the case of the fox and the Anzud chick; in fact, it would be out of place.

In other instances, kohl is not worn, but is applied to an object. This can have several associations. First, kohl seems to emphasize the magnificence of whatever it is applied to. When kohl is used on Ningirsu’s temple, the temple is described as having the “splendor of heaven” (še-er-zid an-na-ka). See “Gudea Cylinder A” column xxvii lines 9-10 and column xxvii line 24-column xxvii line 1. For a transliteration and translation of this text, see Dietz Otto Edzard, Gudea and His Dynasty, RIME 3/1 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1997), 69078. For an electronic edition of this text, see “The building of Ningirsu’s Temple (Gudea, cylinders A and B)” lines 741-742 and 756-757 (ETCSL no. 2.1.7) http://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk/cgi-bin/etcsl.cgi?text=c.2.1.7&display=Crit&charenc=gcirc#.
Second, it seems to have an association with fertility. A raven, on Enki’s instruction, puts a preparation of kohl, oil, and water into a trench for leeks in “Inana and Šukaletuda” lines 51-64. (For a transliteration and translation of this text, see Konrad Volk, Inanna und Šukaletuda: Zur historisch-politischen Deutung eines sumerischen Literaturwerkes (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1995), 117-133. For an electronic edition of this text, see “Inana and Šu-kale-tuda” lines 51-64 (ETCSL no. 1.3.3) http://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk/cgi-bin/etcsl.cgi?text=c.1.3.3&display=Crit&charenc=gcirc#.)

The raven also seems to apply kohl to some part of the date palm (lines 71-75). The raven seems to be using a shaduf to provide water for the garden (lines 69-71 and 85-88). Since the raven appears to be caring for the garden, understanding its use of the kohl as having to do with fertility makes sense in the context. For this interpretation of the raven’s activity in these difficult lines, see Volk, Inanna und Šukaletuda: Zur historisch-politischen Deutung eines sumerischen Literaturwerkes, 158-159. Mařík argues that the use of kohl by the raven, because of its association with Inana and Dumuzi, functions as a type of sympathetic magic to bring about fertility of the garden. See Mařík: 155-157.

His analogy between the two uses seems a bit strained, however particularly when he argues that the “rape” of Inana by Šu-kale-tuda would have been understood as part of a fertility ritual. (See Mařík: 156-162.) Inana’s angry reaction (lines 129-138, 168-176, 185-193, 214-220) and his death sentence (line 296) shed doubt on his interpretation. Nevertheless, the idea of kohl being associated with fertility seems reasonable.

Third, kohl seems to be used in ritual contexts. In the inscription on the Stele of the Vultures, after the leader of Umma swore an oath to various gods, promising not to transgress the boundaries of Ningirsu, Eannatum smeared kohl on the eyes of two doves and put cedar on their heads before releasing them to the various gods (“Eannatum 1,” obverse 16:[44]; 18:3; 19:[11]; 21:15; rev. 1:34). For a transliteration and translation of this text, see Horst Steible, Die altsumerischen Bau- und Weihinschriften. Teil I. Inschriften aus ‘Lagaš’, ed. Burkhart Kienast, Mark A. Brandes, and Horst Steible, FAOS 5/1 (Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner, 1982), 120-145. In an Early Dynastic tablet, AOM 1239, kohl is applied around the eyes of the king. For an edition of this text, see Fumi Karahashi, "An Early Dynastic Table in Ancient Orient Muesum, Tokyo," BAOM 31 (2011): 4-5. Kohl also is prepared for an Ur III scapegoat ritual (HS 1496: 6-7, 18-19, 25-26). For an edition of this text, see Johannes J.A. van Dijk and Markham J. Geller, Ur III Incantations from the Frau Professor Hilprecht-Collection, Jena (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2003), 62-64. In a late Assyrian text in which a goat is substituted for the sick person, kohl is applied around its eyes (LKA 79 and KAR 245). For an edition of this text, see Akio Tsukimoto, Untersuchungen zur Totenpflege (kispum) im alten Mesopotamien, ed. Kurt Bergerhof, Manfried Dietrich, and Oswald Loretz, AOAT 216 (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchen and Butzon & Bercker Kevelaer, 1985), 125-128.

Some scholars suggest that besides being “kohl,” šembi is also a type of scented oil. For example, see Catherine Mittermayer, Enmerkara und der Herr von Arata : ein ungleicher Wetttreit (Fribourg and Göttingen: Academic Press and Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2009), 229. She argues this because in certain circumstances, the šembi is poured out (e.g., Urukagina 5, 222). However, it is not necessary to posit a second definition for šembi. “Kohl,” if mixed with oil and water, as did the raven in “Inana and Šukaletuda” (see the third paragraph of this footnote, above), could be poured out.
**em-du** ("let a man come, let him come.") Another occasion on which Inana wears kohl is in the text known as “Šulgi X.”

In this text, Inana puts kohl on her eyes as part of her preparations for her meeting with the king, Dumuzi. The sexual nature of this encounter is made clear by Inana’s description of what Dumuzi does, such as putting his hand on her genitals. One literary text, “Enmerkar and the lord of Aratta,” hints only indirectly at the idea of sex through the idea of fertility. The context of Inana’s act of putting on kohl in line 590 is not completely understood, but many scholars think this section has to do with fertility.

This idea is supported by the text, which mentions  

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169 “Šulgi X” line 19. For a transliteration and translation of this text, see Klein, 136-145. For an electronic edition of this text, see “A praise poem of Šulgi (Šulgi X)” line 19 (ETCSL no. 2.4.2.24) [http://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk/cgi-bin/etcsl.cgi?text=c.2.4.2.24&display=Crit&charenc=gcirc#].

170 “Šulgi X” line 19

171 “Enmerkar and the Lord of Aratta” line 590. For a transliteration and translation of this text, see Mittermayer, 114-153. For an electronic edition of this text, see “Enmerkar and the lord of Aratta line” 590 (ETCSL no. 1.8.2.3) [http://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk/cgi-bin/etcsl.cgi?text=c.1.8.2.3&display=Crit&charenc=gcirc#].

172 Scholars have understood and translated the previous lines (lines 588-589) in various ways. For example, there is disagreement as to whether there is a change of subject or not (i.e. whether the *um-ma* in line 588 is equivalent to the *ki-sikil* inline 589), and what exactly is going on with the *ki-sikil*. Some scholars see a single subject. Cohen translates, “The old woman when she came to the ‘mountain’ of the lustrous *me/ Like a maiden, who in her day is perfect, went up to him.” See Sol Cohen, “Enmerkar and the Lord of Aratta” (PhD diss., University of Pennsylvania, 1973), 141. Jacobsen translates instead, “When the woman sage came to the mountain of immaculate offices,/ she came out to him like a maiden when her days are over (i.e., her monthly period).” See Thorkild Jacobsen, *The Harps that Once...: Sumerian Poetry in Translation* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1987), 317. Vanstiphout renders these lines as, “The Wise Woman, when she came to the mountain of shining Powers,/ Went up to him like a maiden whose period is at an end.” See Herman L. J. Vanstiphout, *Epics of Sumerian Kings : The Matter of Aratta* (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2003), 91. Other scholars see a change in subject. Kramer translates, “The ‘old woman’, when she came to the land of the pure *me/ Brought out the maid to him before the end of the day.” See Samuel Noah Kramer, *Enmerkar and the Lord of Aratta: A Sumerian Epic Tale of Iraq and Iran* (Philadelphia: University Museum, University of Pennsylvania, 1952), 43. Mittermayer translates, “Als (schliesslich) die alte, weise Frau(, Nisaba) zum ‘Berg der unberührten Kräfte’ kam/ Trat (Inana) vor ihr wie eine heiratsfähige Jungfrau heraus.” See Mittermayer, 151. Mittermayer’s understanding makes the most sense here, given that Inana performs the actions that follow.

173 Cohen interprets this section as a fertility-rite song, sung by Inana for Ama-ušumgal-anna. See Cohen, 40. Mittermayer (2009: 312) sees this as a description of Inana and the king as Dumuzi in the sacred marriage, which in her view, brings about the multiplication of the cattle (i.e. fertility) (p. 81). Waetzoldt also understands this to be the sacred marriage, in which the king plays the role of Dumuzi while a priestess plays the role of Inana. See Hartmut Waetzoldt, "The Colours of Textiles and Variety of Fabrics from..."
the multiplication of various animals (ewes and their lambs, female goats and their kids, cows and their calves, female donkeys and their colts)\(^{174}\) and the heaping up of grain.\(^{175}\)

The notion of fertility is intended to reference the idea of sex, since Inana makes the king (Enmerkar) occupy the throne dais with her;\(^ {176}\) it evokes Inana’s interaction with the Dumuzi as king in “Šulgi X,” which is clearly sexual in nature.

Another item that Inana puts on, the pala-garment, is one of the most important markers of Inana’s identity. While both goddesses\(^ {177}\) and priestesses\(^ {178}\) wear this garment in general,\(^ {179}\) when Inana wears it in various contexts, it emphasizes different facets of her identity: her royalty, and her identity as a goddess of war and sex.

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174 “Enmerkar and the Lord of Aratta” lines 596-599. For a transliteration and translation of this text, see Mittermayer, 114-153. For an electronic edition of this text, see “Enmerkar and the lord of Aratta” lines 596-599 (ETCSL no. 1.8.2.3)
http://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk/cgi-bin/etcsl.cgi?text=c.1.8.2.3&display=Crit&charenc=gcirc#.

175 “Enmerkar and the Lord of Aratta” line 601

176 “Enmerkar and the Lord of Aratta” line 594

177 Enlil offers one to Sud (Ninlil) when he sees her and desires her for his wife (“The Marriage of Sud” line 15). For a transliteration and translation of this text, see Civil: 50-60. For an electronic edition of this text, see “Enlil and Sud” Version A Segment A line 15 (ETCSL no. 1.2.2) http://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk/cgi-bin/etcsl.cgi?text=c.1.2.2&display=Crit&charenc=gcirc#.

Ur-Namma also offers one to Ereškigal in “Ur-Namma A” line 98. For a transliteration and translation of this text, see Esther Flückiger-Hawker, Urnamma of Ur in Sumerian Literary Tradition (Freiburg and Göttingen: University Press Fribourg Switzerland and Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1999), 101-142. For an electronic edition of this text, see “The death of Ur-Namma (Ur-Namma A)” line 98 (ETCSL no. 2.4.1.1) http://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk/cgi-bin/etcsl.cgi?text=c.2.4.1.1&display=Crit&charenc=gcirc#.


179 Note that certain types of clothing can be worn by deities, priests, and kings. For example, the ba-garment (lug\(^ {13}\) ba) is worn by deities such as Inana, kings such as Šulgi...
First, Inana’s identity as the goddess of war is emphasized when she wears a pala-garment. It appears in a text known as “Inana and Ebih.” The text starts with praise for Inana as the “lady of battle” (nin me). Angered because the mountain Ebih failed to show her respect, Inana declares her warlike intentions to attack and destroy the mountain Ebih. Inana then puts on the pala-garment as part of her terrifying martial outfit, in preparation for her battle against the mountain Ebih. In one of the Inana hymns, although the text is broken in the section when she appears to put on the pala-garment, the context makes it clear that she is “untiring in running conflict and battle” (šen-šen me; hub2 sar ak-de3 nu-ku2-u3). This suggests that the pala-garment plays an important role in her identity as the goddess of war and battle.

Second, her royal aspect is highlighted when she puts on the pala-garment. In the text, the pala-garment is qualified as tug nam-nin-a, “the garment of ladyship.” In “The Death of Ur-Namma,” the pala-garment is one of the gifts that Ur-Namma brings as a gift for Ereškigal, the queen of the Netherworld. Thus, its association with royalty and the right to rule is unmistakable. Its association with royalty is also brought out because it is one of the items that Enlil offers to Sud when he proposes to make her his wife and queen, as noted earlier in this section. In “Dumuzi and Geštin-ana,” which is

and Samsuiluna, and priests. See Waetzoldt, *Untersuchungen zur neusumerischen Textilindustrie*, XXI-XXII.

180 “Inana and Ebih” line 22. For the most recent score of this text, see Paul Delnero, “Variation in Sumerian Literary Compositions: A Case Study Based on the Decad” (Ph.D. diss., University of Pennsylvania, 2006), 2298-2358. For a transliteration and translation of this text, see Attinger, "Inana et Ebih," 168-181. For an electronic edition of this text, see “Inana and Ebih” line 23 (ETCSL no. 1.3.2) http://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk/cgi-bin/etcsl.cgi?text=c.1.3.2&display=Crit&charenc=gcirc#.

181 Lines 36-51; lines 37-52 in the ETCSL edition

182 Lines 52-57; lines 53-58 in the ETCSL edition: “Inana, the child of Suen dressed in a pala-garment and covered herself with rejoicing. She bedecked her forehead with fearsome radiance and anger. She straightened out the cornelian flowers on her holy throat. She heroically took the 7-headed šita-weapon at her right. She placed her foot on the lapis lazuli staircase.”

183 “Inana C” line 21. For a transliteration and translation of this text, see Sjöberg, "in-nin ša-gur,-ra: A Hymn to the Goddess Inanna by the en-Priestess Enheduanna," 178-201. For an electronic edition of this text, see “A hymn to Inana (Inana C)” line 21 (ETCSL no. 4.07.03) http://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk/cgi-bin/etcsl.cgi?text=c.4.07.3&display=Crit&charenc=gcirc#.

184 “Inana C” line 20.

185 “Ur-Namma A” line 98. For a transliteration and translation of this text, see Flückiger-Hawker, 101-142. For an electronic edition of this text, see “The death of Ur-Namma (Ur-Namma A)” line 98 (ETCSL no. 2.4.1.1) http://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk/cgi-bin/etcsl.cgi?text=c.2.4.1.1&display=Crit&charenc=gcirc#.

186 “The Marriage of Sud” line 15. For a transliteration and translation of this text, see Civil: 50-60. For an electronic edition of this text, see “Enlil and Sud” line 15 (ETCSL no. 1.2.2) http://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk/cgi-bin/etcsl.cgi?text=c.1.2.2&display=Crit&charenc=gcirc#.
thematically related to Inana’s Descent, the gālla-demons forbid Inana from putting it on before they drag her to the netherworld, which is parallel to the idea of the garment being removed from Inana at one of the gates before entering the netherworld.

Third, the pala-garment highlights Inana’s identity as the goddess of sex. As discussed earlier in this subsection, Inana puts on the pala-garment in the Dumuzi-Inana literature, where the combination of items clearly emphasizes Inana’s identity as the goddess of sex. Thus, when Inana puts on the pala-garment in preparation for her descent to the netherworld, it is possible that all three major aspects of Inana’s identity—her royal status, and her identity as the goddess of war and sex—were being expressed. No wonder, then, that Ereškigal became frightened, and had the pala-garment removed from Inana’s body at one of the gates of the netherworld.

While the gold bracelet (har kug-si₂) Inana puts on her hand and the small lapis lazuli beads (na₄za-gin₃ di₄-di₄-la₂) she puts around her neck, when worn in combination with the pala-garment and kohl, express Inana’s identity as the goddess of sex (see discussion earlier in this section), these two items also reflect her high, queenly status. In literary texts, deities and women of high status receive gold bracelets. Ur-Namma offers a gold bracelet to Namtar, and Šu-Suen gives one to the unnamed woman who speaks in the balbale.

Bracelets (har) and lapis lazuli beads also appear in some lists of items.

187 “Dumuzi and Ġeštin-ana” line 7. For a transliteration and translation of this text, see Sladek, 226-236. For an electronic edition of this text, see “Dumuzi and Ġeštin-ana” line 7 (ETCSL no. 1.4.1.1) http://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk/cgi-bin/etcsl.cgi?text=c.1.4.1.1&display=Crit&charenc=gcirc#. In this text, there are two other items that Inana is forbidden from putting on that are also related to a royal status. First, in line 7, Inana is prohibited from putting on a ba-garment, which is worn by deities, kings, and priests. See Waetzoldt, Untersuchungen zur neusumerischen Textilindustrie, XXI-XXII. Second, in line 8, Inana is forbidden from putting on a crown (men), which would also be worn by royalty.

188 Line 160. For a transliteration and translation of this text, see Sladek, 103-181. For an electronic edition of this text, see “Inana’s descent to the nether world” line 160 (ETCSL no. 1.4.1) http://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk/cgi-bin/etcsl.cgi?text=c.1.4.1.1&display=Crit&charenc=gcirc#. For a transliteration and translation of this text, see Flückiger-Hawker, 101-142, 154-163. For an electronic edition of this text, see “The death of Ur-Namma (Ur-Namma A)” Nippur version line 106 (ETCSL no. 2.4.1.1) http://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk/cgi-bin/etcsl.cgi?text=c.2.4.1.1&display=Crit&charenc=gcirc#; “The death of Ur-Namma (Ur-Namma A)” Susa version Segment C line 38 (ETCSL no. 2.4.1.1) http://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk/cgi-bin/etcsl.cgi?text=c.2.4.1.1&display=Crit&charenc=gcirc#.

189 “Ur-Namma A” line 106; “Ur-Namma A” Susa version line 79. For a transliteration and translation of this text, see Flückiger-Hawker, 101-142, 154-163. For an electronic edition of this text, see “The death of Ur-Namma (Ur-Namma A)” Nippur version line 106 (ETCSL no. 2.4.1.1) http://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk/cgi-bin/etcsl.cgi?text=c.2.4.1.1&display=Crit&charenc=gcirc#; “The death of Ur-Namma (Ur-Namma A)” Susa version Segment C line 38 (ETCSL no. 2.4.1.1) http://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk/cgi-bin/etcsl.cgi?text=c.2.4.1.1&display=Crit&charenc=gcirc#.

190 “Šu-Suen A” line 12. For a transliteration and translation of this text, see Sefati, 344-346. For an electronic edition of this text, see “A balbale to Bau for Šu-Suen (Šu-Suen A)” line 12 (ETCSL no. 2.4.4.1) http://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk/cgi-bin/etcsl.cgi?text=c.2.4.4.1&display=Crit&charenc=gcirc#. Scholars disagree about the identity of this woman. Some scholars argue that the speaker is Kubātum, mentioned in line 6. See Pascal Attinger, "Review of Love Songs in Sumerian Literature. Critical
that goddesses receive. Women of high social status such as queens also can receive necklaces made of lapis lazuli or other precious materials. It may seem obvious, but...
the materials used in such items would have reflected the high status of the wearer. In her study of the various items of jewelry found in the Royal Cemetery at Ur, Gansell defined material privilege as “wealth indicated through supplementary pieces of jewellery, higher quantities of standard adornment items, and, or, articles made of more precious resources.” Lapis lazuli, which would have been imported from Afghanistan, would also have been affordable only by those of high status. In literary texts, kings negotiate for lapis lazuli. For example, Enmerkar does so on the advice of Inana in “Enmerkar and the Lord of Aratta.” Thus, by wearing a gold bracelet and lapis lazuli beads around her neck, Inana would have been proclaiming her identity as a high-status queen.

By wearing a pala-garment, kohl on her eyes, a bracelet, and lapis lazuli beads on her neck, both in combination and individually, Inana’s identity in all its fullness—her high queenly status, as well as her identity as the goddess of sex and war—would have been expressed.

192 Kubātum, the wife of Šu-Suen, had a necklace made of turquoise, cornelian, and gold. See Falkenstein, "Eine Hymne auf Šúsīn von Ur," 46. For more on Kubātum, see footnote 190 above.
193 Gansell: 39. She notes that Puabi, for example, had not only more jewelry than the other individuals buried in the cemetery, but her metal jewelry was larger, heavier, and made of gold rather than silver or other metals. See Gansell: 39. The majority of individuals in the cemetery wore jewelry of copper, shell, and stone, rather than gold, lapis lazuli, and cornelian. See Gansell: 32. Granted, Gansell’s evidence comes from an earlier period. The scarcity of jewelry made of precious materials during the Old Babylonian period is partly due to historical reasons (destruction and looting) and partly due to the lack of excavations of cemeteries from this period. See Maxwell-Hyslop, 83.
195 In archaeological contexts, particularly in burials, lapis lazuli is always associated with other precious materials such as cornelian, turquoise, gold, and silver; these tend to be found in the burials of the materially privileged. See Casanova, 201. Gansell’s study of the Royal Cemetery at Ur focuses on the sets of jewelry made of gold, silver, lapis lazuli, and cornelian, rather than the items made of less precious materials. See Gansell: 32.
196 Lines 38-41, 61ff. For a transliteration and translation of this text, see Mittermayer, 114-153. For an electronic edition of this text, see “Enmerkar and the lord of Aratta” (ETCSL no. 1.8.2.3) http://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk/cgi-bin/etcsl.cgi?text=c.1.8.2.3&display=Crit&charenc=gcirc#.
2.2.4 **na-nunuz tab-ba**

Outside of the lexical tradition, the **na-nunuz tab-ba** is mentioned only in the text of “Inana’s Descent.” I suggest that the **na-nunuz tab-ba** may be a segmented bead, with two egg-shaped segments. Segmented beads are classified as multiple beads, and this category include spacing beads, which can be used to keep strings of beads at the appropriate distance from each other. Segmented beads are clearly attested in the archaeological record in Mesopotamia from at least the middle of the 2nd millennium B.C.E. They are attested even earlier during the Uruk period at nearby Susa. They are also attested during the Isin-Larsa / Old Babylonian period at Tepe Hissar. These segmented beads can have two, three, or more segments. This would correspond nicely to the late lexical tradition, where there is not only a **na-nunuz tab-ba** but also a **na-nunuz ešs tab-ba**. Although scholars do not agree as to what exactly this item is, it seems

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201 UET 6/2, 406 Rev. 8'-9’ For a transliteration of this text, see [http://oracc.museum.upenn.edu/dcclt/P247834](http://oracc.museum.upenn.edu/dcclt/P247834). The **na-nunuz tab-ba** alone appears in the Old Babylonian lexical tradition. See for example, OB *urš-ra* (CT 06 11-14 a ii 29). For a transliteration and translation of this text, see [http://oracc.museum.upenn.edu/dcclt/P247863](http://oracc.museum.upenn.edu/dcclt/P247863).
202 Sladek translates this term literally, as “twin egg-shaped beads.” (See Sladek, 79-80.) Klein suggests that the **na-nunuz tab-ba** are stones that are suspended from the *tuditum* (toggle-pin), which serve both as decoration and as a way to prevent the toggle-pin from slipping out. See Harald Klein, *"Tudittum,"* ZA 73 (1983): 277. This is an attractive suggestion, because it corresponds to the visual record. See Klein, *"Tudittum,"* 282, Fig. 2. One problem with this suggestion is that in some versions of the text (Text B = SEM 49; Text C = SRT 53; Text E = TuM NF 3 2), Inana puts on the **na-nunuz tab-ba** before putting on the toggle pin. However, since in some versions of the text Inana puts on the *tuditum* (toggle pin) before the pala-garment (Text A = SEM 50; Text B = SEM 49; Text C = SRT 53), when in reality it would be impossible to do so, it is not clear that the order in which the items are mentioned is important. A segmented bead would also fulfill this function nicely, although the visual record seems to suggest that the beads or stones were separate.

In the late lexical tradition (UET 6/2, 406 Rev. 8’; PBS 12, 06 Rev. i 18), **na-nunuz tab-ba** is equated with *nīrum*. It is not clear, however, what *nīrum* would mean in this context. Sladek takes it to be the same as the *nīrum* that means “yoke,” and suggests that here it might mean “neckband.” See Sladek, 79. This interpretation is difficult for two reasons. First, the *nīrum* that means “yoke” is usually written with the *šudul* sign. Second, in “Inana’s Descent,” this item is worn on her chest, not her neck.
to be associated with Inana and to reflect her high status. A similar item, the \textit{nunuz} (Akkadian \textit{erimmatum}) that Inana/\textit{Ištar} puts on in the Akkadian version of the text\textsuperscript{203} appears in lists of items belonging to goddesses.\textsuperscript{204} In later medical texts, \textit{nunuz} is clearly linked to Inana, as it is offered in the treatment of the disease called “hand of \textit{Ištar}.”\textsuperscript{205}

\subsection{2.2.5 \textit{tu-di-tum}}

The \textit{tuditum} (Akkadian \textit{tudittum}, pl. \textit{tu-dinātum}) or toggle pin, undoubtedly expresses Inana’s identity as the goddess of sex. Its name, “come, man, come” (Sumerian \textit{lu₂ ĝa₂-nu₂ ĝa₂-nu₂},\textsuperscript{206} unequivocally indicates its sexual nature. Further, it is a quintessentially feminine object. Women or female deities,\textsuperscript{207} particularly Inana,\textsuperscript{208}

\begin{table}

The CAD suggests that \textit{nīrum} might be a braided string. In ritual contexts, a \textit{nīrum} is sometimes braided. In this case, it would be used for necklaces. See CAD N II, under \textit{nīru} II, p. 265. The problem with this interpretation is that the word has the determinative for stone, \textit{nīr}. Braiding something made of stone seems unlikely, although it would be possible to braid strings of stones. AHw takes it as a Sumerian loanword for \textit{nīr}. (See AHw p. 794). While this is possible, the nīr-stone is usually equated with the Akkadian \textit{hulālu}-stone (banded agate). (For the identification of the \textit{hulālu}-stone as banded agate, see Anais Schuster-Brandis, \textit{Steine als Schutz- und Heilmittel : Untersuchung zu ihrer Verwendung in der Beschwörungskunst Mesopotamiens im 1. Jt. v. Chr.} (Münster: Ugarit-Verlag, 2008), 436.)

\textsuperscript{203}CT 15 45:49 For the most recent edition of this text of this text, see Pirjo Lapinkivi, \textit{The Neo-Assyrian Myth of Ištar’s Descent and Resurrection}, SAACT VI (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2010).

\textsuperscript{204}A pale, egg-shaped bead of lapis lazuli belongs to the goddess Ninegala in Ereš (YOS 4, 296 Rev. line 1). An inventory of the jewelry of Ninegala in Qatna lists jewelry containing egg-shaped beads of various materials: gold (RA 43 142:52; 162:241; 166:300; 168:311), lapis lazuli (RA 43 148:100; 150:129; 162:241; 164:259, 266; 168:312, 322; 170:338), \textit{dušu}-stone (RA 43 152:149; 156:187), cornelian 156:181), \textit{ehlipakku}-stone (RA 43 148:96; 150:131; 160:218; 162:252; 170:344, 355), and \textit{azalwanu}-stone (RA 43:158:205). Note that sometimes Ninegala is either associated or equated with Inana. Similar items also appear in lists from Mari (ARM 7 244:3'; 246: 4; 247:7), but because the texts are broken, the recipient or owner of the items is not known. Given that these texts belong to the royal archives, however, it is likely that they were intended for someone of high status, whether human or deity.

\textsuperscript{205}Labat TDP 82:17; 88:5

\textsuperscript{206}Lines 23, 111, 145. For a transliteration and translation of this text, see Sladek, 103-181. For an electronic edition of this text, see “Inana’s descent to the nether world” lines 23, 111, 145 (ETCSL no. 1.4.1) http://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk/cgi-bin/etcsl.cgi?text=c.1.4.1&display=Crit&charenc=gcirc#.

\textsuperscript{207}An inventory of items for the goddess Ninegala includes 10 bronze toggle pins weighing 1 mina and 10 shekels and 13 copper toggle pins weighing \( \frac{1}{2} \) mina. See YOS 4, 296 Rev. lines 2-5. A list of items owned by Ninhursaša includes 1 bronze toggle pin with a “head” of lapis lazuli and a “neck” inlaid with silver, 4 bronze toggle pins
used it as a fastener for wrapped garments.209 Toggle pins, along with hair combs and spindles, were among those items handed over as an appeasement to the female demon Lamaštu.210 Toggle pins could even stand in for a female participant in certain rituals, underscoring their nature as a marker of femininity. Men, on the other hand, only accept toggle pins in the course of their official duties, gift them, or bring them as offerings.212

208 In one administrative text, Inana receives several toggle pins of gold, silver, and cornelian. See AAICAB 1/1, pl. 043-044, 1911-240 Obv. i lines 5-6; 12; ii line 1; iii lines 10-11; Rev. i lines 2-3; 21. An inventory of items belonging to Ištar of Lagaba, LB 1090, includes 2 gold toggle pins and 6 ivory toggle pins. (Obv. lines 5 and 12.)


211 Ibid., 277.

212 See Klein, "Tudittum," 271-272. Note that a toggle pin is one of the gifts that Ur-Namma brings for Dimpimekug in “Ur-Namma A” lines 121-122; “Ur-Namma A” Susa version lines 98-100. For a transliteration and translation of this text, see Flückiger-Hawker, 101-142, 154-163. For an electronic edition of this text, see “The death of Ur-Namma (Ur-Namma A)” Nippur version lines 121-122 (ETCSL no. 2.4.1.1) http://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk/cgi-bin/etcsl.cgi?text=c.2.4.1.1&display=Crit&charenc=gcirc#; “The death of Ur-Namma (Ur-Namma A)” Susa version Segment C lines 57-60 (ETCSL no. 2.4.1.1) http://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk/cgi-bin/etcsl.cgi?text=c.2.4.1.1&display=Crit&charenc=gcirc#.
2.2.6 **gi-diš-ninda and eš₂ gana₂**

Inana also takes with her a **gi-diš-ninda** and **eš₂ gana₂**, a measuring rod and rope, which seem to reflect her high status. In the literary tradition, these items are normally associated with goddesses or kings. The measuring rod and rope carried by

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214 As noted by Robson, 223. In addition to Inana, goddesses that are associated with both of these items include Nisaba (“Enki and the World Order” lines 412-413. For a transliteration and translation of this text, see Benito, 85-137. For an electronic edition of this text, see “Enki and the world order lines” 413-414 (ETCSL no. 1.1.3) [http://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk/cgi-bin/etcsl.cgi?text=c.1.1.3&display=Crit&charenc=gcirc#](http://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk/cgi-bin/etcsl.cgi?text=c.1.1.3&display=Crit&charenc=gcirc#), Sud/Ninlil (“The Marriage of Sud” lines 166-167. For a transliteration and translation see Civil: 50-60. For an electronic edition of this text, see “Enlil and Sud” Version A Segment A lines 166-167 (ETCSL no. 1.2.2) [http://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk/cgi-bin/etcsl.cgi?text=c.1.2.2&display=Crit&charenc=gcirc#](http://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk/cgi-bin/etcsl.cgi?text=c.1.2.2&display=Crit&charenc=gcirc#), Ninazimua (“The Death of Ur-Namma” Susa version line 93’. For a transliteration and translation of this text, see Flückiger-Hawker, 154-163. For an electronic edition of this text, see “The death of Ur-Namma (Ur-Namma A)” Susa version Segment C line 52 (ETCSL no. 2.4.1.1) [http://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk/cgi-bin/etcsl.cgi?text=c.2.4.1.1&display=Crit&charenc=gcirc#](http://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk/cgi-bin/etcsl.cgi?text=c.2.4.1.1&display=Crit&charenc=gcirc#), and Ninimma (“Ninimma A” line 7. For a transliteration and translation of this text, see Karen Focke, "Die Göttin Nin-imma," *ZA* 88 (1998): 197-200. For an electronic edition of this text, see “A hymn to Ninimma (Ninimma A)” Segment A line 8 (ETCSL no. 4.21.1).). Nisaba also bestows these items on the king Lipit-Eštar (“Lipit-Eštar B” line 23. For a transliteration and
the goddesses are typically made out of lapis lazuli. Robson points out that goddesses rarely put their measuring equipment to practical use, which makes sense, given that a lapis lazuli measuring rope, in particular, would not be functional. Therefore, both the objects themselves and the material out of which they are made must indicate Inana’s status.

Thus, when Inana puts on these various items of dress, she puts on her identity as both a high-ranking goddess of queenly status and two aspects of her identity, war and sex. Which aspect of her identity they indicate is summarized in Table 6.

...translation of this text, see H.L.J. Vanstiphout, "Lipit-Eštar's Praise in the Edubba," JCS 30 (1978): 36-39. For an electronic edition of this text, see “A praise poem of Lipit-Eštar (Lipit-Eštar B)” line 23 (ETCSL no. 2.5.5.2) http://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk/cgi-bin/etcsl.cgi?text=c.2.5.5.2&display=Crit&charenc=gcirc#. Sometimes, only one of the two items is associated with an individual. The underworld god Ninazu is associated with the measuring line in “Enlil and Ninlil” line 116. (For a transliteration and translation of this text, see Hermann Behrens, Enlil und Ninlil: Ein sumerischer Mythos aus Nippur (Roma: Pontificio Instituto Biblico, 1978), 14-45, 220-227. For an electronic edition of this text, see “Enlil and Ninlil” line 116 (ETCSL no. 1.2.1) http://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk/cgi-bin/etcsl.cgi?text=c.1.2.1&display=Crit&charenc=gcirc#. The king Šulgi uses only the measuring line in “Šulgi C” line 40. (For a transliteration and translation of this text, see G. R. Castellino, Two Šulgi Hymns (BC) (Roma: Istituto di Studi del Vicino Oriente, 1972), 248-263. For an electronic edition of this text, see “A praise poem of Šulgi (Šulgi C)” line 42 (ETCSL no. 2.4.2.03) http://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk/cgi-bin/etcsl.cgi?text=c.2.4.2.03&display=Crit&charenc=gcirc#. Outside of the literary tradition, Mesalim, a king of Kiš, also uses the measuring line (Entemena 28-29 Column i line 11). For a transliteration and translation of this text, see Steible, 23-245. In the late tradition, the measuring rod is associated with the god Nabû (4R 14 no. 13 lines 7ff.) and the king Nabopolassar (Hilprecht, BE I, no. 84, Col. 2 line 25).

215 Robson, 224. For Robson, goddesses such as Nisaba pass on such equipment to kings in order to ensure just rule (pp. 233-234).
Table 6: Summary of aspects of identity expressed by Inana’s dress

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item of Dress</th>
<th>Queenly Status</th>
<th>War</th>
<th>Sex</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>tugšu-gur-ra</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hi-li</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tugšu-pala₃, šebmi, na₄za-gin₃ di₄-di₄-la₂, and har kug-sig₁₇ (when worn together)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tugšu-pala₃</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>šebmi</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>na₄za-gin₃ di₄-di₄-la₂</td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>har kug-sig₁₇</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>na₄nunuz tab-ba</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tu-di-tum</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gi-diš-ninda and eš₂ gana₂ za-gin₃</td>
<td></td>
<td>x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2.3 Inana’s Dress vs. Her Stated Identity and Intention

If, when Inana puts on the above-mentioned items of dress, she puts on her identity, Inana is constructing her identity as a high-ranking goddess of queenly status as well as her identity as the goddess of war and sex, then her dress gives away the fact that her stated identity and intention for going to the Netherworld are lies. Her intention is to transgress the boundaries of her identity and take over Ereškigal’s place as queen of the Netherworld. When she arrives at the gate of the Netherworld, she states that she is “Inana going to the east/toward the sunrise.”216 When questioned about why she is then heading toward the Netherworld, Inana announces that she is there for the funeral of her sister’s husband.217 Scholars agree that Inana’s stated reasons for going down to the Netherworld were a cover for her actual intention of seizing control of the Netherworld. Evidence from the narrative itself is usually used to prove this.218

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216 Line 81. For a transliteration and translation of this text, see Sladek, 103-181. For an electronic edition of this text, see “Inana’s descent to the nether world” lines 23, 111, 145 (ETCSL no. 1.4.1) http://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk/cgi-bin/etcsl.cgi?text=c.1.4.1&display=Crit&charenc=gcirc#.

217 Lines 86-89. For a transliteration and translation of this text, see Ibid. For an electronic edition of this text, see “Inana’s descent to the nether world” lines 23, 111, 145 (ETCSL no. 1.4.1) http://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk/cgi-bin/etcsl.cgi?text=c.1.4.1&display=Crit&charenc=gcirc#.

218 At the opening of the narrative, Inana sets her mind from the great above (the heavens) on the great below (the Netherworld). The text explicitly states that she abandoned heaven, earth, and her various temples in order to go there. (Lines 1-13. For a
However, Inana’s statement that she is attending the funeral of her sister’s husband is belied by her dress, which stands out in sharp contrast to the customary garb of a mourner. Mourning garb and rituals are described in “Inana’s Descent to the Netherworld,” and the related Sumerian texts “Dumuzi’s Dream” and “Dumuzi and Geštinana.” These texts illustrate three different aspects the dress of the mourner. First, a mourner lacerates herself. This is one of the ways that Inana instructs Ninšubur to mourn for her when she does not return from the Netherworld; Ninšubur complies with these instructions. Geštinana, Dumuzi’s sister, also lacerates herself when she mourns for him as he is being pursued by the demons that intend to take him to the Netherworld in Inana’s place. Second, the mourner wears a dirty garment. As commanded by Inana, Ninšubur wears a dirty garment, as though it were the only garment that she owned, like a pauper. Likewise, the other deities who are mourning Inana, Šara and transliteration and translation of this text, see Ibid. For an electronic edition of this text, see “Inana’s descent to the nether world” lines 23, 111, 145 (ETCSL no. 1.4.1) http://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk/cgi-bin/etcsl.cgi?text=c.1.4.1&display=Crit&charenc=gcirc#.) Furthermore, when Inana runs into trouble, both Enlil and Nanna refuse to help her on the grounds that she wanted both heaven and the great below (the Netherworld). (Lines 190-194 and 204-208. For a transliteration and translation of this text, see Sladek, 103-181. For an electronic edition of this text, see “Inana’s descent to the nether world” lines 23, 111, 145 (ETCSL no. 1.4.1) http://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk/cgi-bin/etcsl.cgi?text=c.1.4.1&display=Crit&charenc=gcirc#.) See further discussion on Enlil’s and Nanna’s refusal to help Inana in section 2.5 below.

219 Mourning garb also appears in the Akkadian story, “The Story of Adapa.” Adapa, who is summoned to heaven to account for his actions in breaking the wing of the south wind, is advised to appear with his hair unkempt and in a mourning garment, in order to gain the favor of the deities whose disappearance from the earth he is purportedly mourning.

220 Lines 37-38, 179-180, 319-320. For a transliteration and translation of this text, see Sladek, 103-181. For an electronic edition of this text, see “Inana’s descent to the nether world” lines 23, 111, 145 (ETCSL no. 1.4.1) http://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk/cgi-bin/etcsl.cgi?text=c.1.4.1&display=Crit&charenc=gcirc#. 221 “Dumuzi and Geštin-ana” line 39 and “Dumuzi’s Dream” lines 69 and 242-244. For a transliteration and translation of “Dumuzi and Geštin-ana,” see Ibid., 226-236. For an electronic edition of this text, see “Dumuzid and Geštin-ana” line 38 (ETCSL no. 1.4.1.1) http://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk/cgi-bin/etcsl.cgi?text=c.1.4.1.1&display=Crit&charenc=gcirc#. For a transliteration and translation of “Dumuzi’s Dream,” see Bendt Alster, Dumuzi’s Dream: Aspects of Oral Poetry in a Sumerian Myth (Copenhagen: Akademisk Forlag, 1972), 52-83. For an electronic edition of this text, see “Dumuzid’s dream” (ETCSL no. 1.4.3) http://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk/cgi-bin/etcsl.cgi?text=c.1.4.3&display=Crit&charenc=gcirc#. 222 Line 308 and lines 39, 181, 321. For a transliteration and translation of this text, see Sladek, 103-181. For an electronic edition of this text, see “Inana’s descent to the nether world” lines 23, 111, 145 (ETCSL no. 1.4.1) http://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk/cgi-bin/etcsl.cgi?text=c.1.4.1&display=Crit&charenc=gcirc#. The idea of a garment that is worn daily being dirty is confirmed by formulas contained in various 1st millennium
Lulal, also dress in dirty garments. Third, the mourner’s hair is unkempt. Ġeštinana’s hair is described as being blown around like a storm wind. As discussed in the previous section, Inana’s dress, in contradistinction to the dress of a mourner, proclaims her as a high-ranking goddess of queenly status, with her identity as the goddess of both war and sex. It is clear from her dress that she is coming to the Netherworld to conquer, not to mourn.

Furthermore, as discussed in section 2.2 above, in dressing, Inana put on her identity in all its fullness—with the exception of her identity as the planet Venus. Inana’s ambiguous statement that she is “Inana going to the east/ toward the sunrise,” a lie about her identity, is also divulged by her dress. The signs in the Sumerian phrase are ki ṭutu e₃ a aš. This could be interpreted in several ways, but the most relevant are to read it as ki ṭutu e₃-a-aš (“(going) toward the place where Šamaš (i.e., the sun) goes out” = “(going) to the east.”) or ki ṭutu-e₃-a-aš (“(going) toward the sunrise”). Polonsky argues for the first interpretation, noting the contrast between this phrase and ki ṭutu šu₂, “the place where the sun sets,” i.e. the Netherworld. For Polonsky, it is ironic that Inana, who is associated with the place where the sun goes out, the “place where the gods assemble at daybreak to decree destiny for the continuance of life,” is going to the Netherworld, “where the only fate is death.” Inana’s statement seems to be deliberately ambiguous, though, because as Inana “going toward the sunrise,” she seems to be identifying herself in her incarnation as the planet Venus, which is sometimes known as the Morning Star because of its brightness just before sunrise. Inana, in her incarnation as an astral or heavenly deity, would have no business in the Netherworld. No wonder, then, that Ereškigal’s doorkeeper, Neti, responds to Inana’s divinatory queries to Shamash. The formula asks Shamash to “Disregard that he who touches the forehead of the sheep is dressed in his everyday soiled garment.” See Ivan Starr, Queries to the Sungod: Divination and Politics in Sargonid Assyria (Helsinki: Helsinki University Press, 1990).

223 Lines 331 and 341. For a transliteration and translation of this text, see Ibid. For an electronic edition of this text, see “Inana’s descent to the nether world” lines 23, 111, 145 (ETCSL no. 1.4.1) http://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk/cgi-bin/etcsl.cgi?text=c.1.4.1&display=Crit&charenc=gcirc#.

224 “Dumuzi’s Dream” line 67. For a transliteration and translation of “Dumuzi’s Dream,” see Alster, Dumuzi’s Dream: Aspects of Oral Poetry in a Sumerian Myth, 52-83. For an electronic edition of this text, see “Dumuzid’s dream” (ETCSL no. 1.4.3) http://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk/cgi-bin/etcsl.cgi?text=c.1.4.3&display=Crit&charenc=gcirc#.

225 One such interpretation would be to read the signs as ki-ṭutu e₃-a-aš. This could be translated as “going towards ki-ṭutu,” where ki-ṭutu is a cultic location or ritual. For the identification of this term, see Manfred Krebernik, "Ein ki-ṭutu-Gebet aus der Hilprecht-Sammlung," ZA 91 (2001): 239-240.

assertion of identity by asking, “If you are Inana going toward the east/toward the sunrise, why have you traveled to the land of no return? How did you set your heart on the road whose traveler never returns?” It is not surprising, then, that Ereškigal was not taken in by Inana’s self-identification or her purported reason for arriving at the Netherworld.

2.4 Ereškigal’s Trick: Remove Inana’s Identity

Since Inana’s most relevant identity, which she portrayed through means of her dress, was that of a queen and warrior, it would have been necessary for Ereškigal to trick Inana into removing her dress, and thus her identity, in order for Inana’s attempt at usurpation to fail. Dina Katz has argued that the removal of one item of Inana’s dress at each of the gates of the Netherworld was a trick, and not a “rite of the Netherworld” as claimed by the gatekeeper, Neti, based on both archaeological and textual evidence.

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231 Lines 82-84. For a transliteration and translation of this text, see Sladek, 103-181. For an electronic edition of this text, see “Inana’s descent to the nether world” lines 23, 111, 145 (ETCSL no. 1.4.1) [http://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk/cgi-bin/etcs1.cgi?text=c.1.4.1&display=Crit&charenc=gcirc#].

232 Lines 133, 138, 143, 148, 153, 158, and 163. For a transliteration and translation of this text, see Ibid. For an electronic edition of this text, see “Inana’s descent to the nether world” lines 23, 111, 145 (ETCSL no. 1.4.1) [http://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk/cgi-bin/etcs1.cgi?text=c.1.4.1&display=Crit&charenc=gcirc#].

233 One obvious example is the graves at the Royal Cemetery at Ur, including various items of dress (primarily jewelry) found in Queen Puabi’s grave. See Dina Katz, "Inanna's Descent and Undressing the Dead as a Divine Law," ZA 85 (1995): 221-222. During the Old Babylonian period, there is evidence that the dead were buried with at least some form of dress. At Ur, the burials contained various types of jewelry, such as bracelets and bangles (LG/5, LG/12, LG/15, L/G 27, L/G 28, L/G 30, L/G 33, L/G 35, L/G 44, L/G 47, L/G 61, L/G 71, L/G 84, L/G 101, L/G 129, L/G 146, L/G 157, L/G 158, L/G 164, L/G 165, L/G 172, L/G 177, L/G 178, L/G 179, L/G 182, L/G 186), rings (L/G 27, L/G 28, L/G 33, L/G 35, L/G 44, L/G 61, L/G 84, L/G 113, L/G 116, L/G 117, L/G 121, L/G 141, L/G 162, L/G 165, L/G 176, L/G 177, L/G 179, L/G 184, L/G 192, L/G 193, L/G 196), earrings (L/G 58, L/G 114, L/G 115) and assorted beads (LG/1, LG/12, L/G 27, L/G 28, L/G 33, L/G 35, L/G 44, L/G 48, L/G 58, L/G 59, L/G 63, L/G 66, L/G 71, L/G 72, L/G 74, L/G 100, L/G 102, L/G 105, L/G 113, L/G 114, L/G 121, L/G 133, L/G 140, L/G 149, L/G 157, L/G 158, L/G 168, L/G 178, L/G 179, L/G 186, L/G 189, L/G 192). See Woolley and Mallowan, The Old Babylonian Period, 195-213. At Tell ed-Dēr, for example, a necklace of beads was recovered from the tomb of an adult female (T. 261). See Gasche, 63 and Plate 18: D 4060. Textile remains were also found in various graves. See H.-J. Hundt, "Textilreste aus Tel ed-Dēr und Susa," in Tell ed-Dēr IV: Progress Reports (Second Series), ed. Leon de Meyer (Leuven: Peeters, 1984), 136.

234 One Old Babylonian dowry text, BM 16465, mentions in Column ii lines 9-10, four textiles (tugasguza), of which two are intended for the grave. For a transliteration and translation of this text, see Dalley: 69-73. An earlier text from pre-Sargonic Lagab (HMA 9-1798; formerly UCLM 9-1798) lists items intended as grave goods for Bilala, a
where it is clear that the dead were dressed. Previously, scholars argued that the dead must have arrived in the Netherworld naked.\textsuperscript{235}

It is obvious, however, that Inana’s dress had to do more than just symbolize her powers, as scholars have long argued.\textsuperscript{236} First, Inana still seems to have her powers intact when she arrives in the Netherworld, even though she is stripped of one item of dress at each of the gates. She actually succeeds in pushing Ereškigal off of her throne and sitting down on it.\textsuperscript{237} It is only the judgment of the Anuna gods that causes her usurpation of the throne to fail.\textsuperscript{238} Second, since Inana put on nine different items of dress, but there were only seven gates, she would have still had two items of dress remaining when she finally entered the Netherworld. If her dress symbolized her powers, then she would have still had two powers remaining. Scholars who want to see Inana as powerless at this point have attempted to deal with this difficulty with various explanations. Sladek, for example, argues that šembi (kohl), which was not one of the attested items removed at any of the gates, is not a “removable article of attire.”\textsuperscript{239} While the removal of kohl from Inana’s eyes might have been difficult to describe in a literary text, Sladek’s solution is problematic. While it is true that none of the preserved texts mention the removal of

\textbf{sanga} of Keš and his wife Lalla, as noted by Katz: 222-223. The text was published by Daniel A. Foxvog, "Funerary Furnishings in an Early Sumerian Grave from Lagab," in \textit{Death in Mesopotamia}, ed. Bendt Alster (Copenhagen: Akademisk Forlag, 1980). As noted in sections 2.2.3 and 2.2.5 above, in the literary text known as “The Death of Ur-Namma,” some of the items that Ur-Namma intended as gifts for the deities of the underworld included items that were removed from Inana at the seven gates, including a \textbf{tu-di-tum} (toggle pin) for Dimpimekug in “Ur-Namma A” lines 121-122. (For a transliteration and translation of this text, see Flückiger-Hawker, 101-142. For an electronic edition of this text, see “The death of Ur-Namma (Ur-Namma A)” Nippur version lines 121-122 (ETCSL no. 2.4.1.1) \url{http://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk/cgi-bin/etcsl.cgi?text=c.2.4.1.1&display=Crit&charenc=gcirc#}.) The other gift item that Ur-Namma brings is a \textsuperscript{ tug-pala} (pala-garment) for Ereškigal herself in line 98. See also Katz: 223.


\textsuperscript{236} For example, see Katz: 224.

\textsuperscript{237} Lines 165-166. For a transliteration and translation of this text, see Sladek, 103-181. For an electronic edition of this text, see “Inana’s descent to the nether world” lines 23, 111, 145 (ETCSL no. 1.4.1) \url{http://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk/cgi-bin/etcsl.cgi?text=c.1.4.1&display=Crit&charenc=gcirc#}.

\textsuperscript{238} Lines 167-172. For a transliteration and translation of this text, see Ibid. For an electronic edition of this text, see “Inana’s descent to the nether world” lines 23, 111, 145 (ETCSL no. 1.4.1) \url{http://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk/cgi-bin/etcsl.cgi?text=c.1.4.1&display=Crit&charenc=gcirc#}. The reason for their anger will be discussed in section 2.5 below.

\textsuperscript{239} Ibid., 72.
kohl, this is an argument from silence. This section is broken in most of the copies of this text, so it is possible that kohl was mentioned in one of the broken sections. Third, it is not entirely certain that Inana’s dress can be equated with the seven me that she took with her. 240 As noted in sections 2.1 and 2.2 above, there are nine items of dress that Inana puts on, but she takes with her only seven me. Further, the text states that Inana grasped the me in her hand. 241 The only items that Inana clearly took in her hand were the lapis lazuli measuring rod and measuring rope. 242 In addition, while Inana might be tricked into removing one item of dress at each of the seven gates, it is questionable whether she would have given up her powers so easily. Finally, Inana’s punishment by the Anuna gods makes it clear that she has lost her identity, not necessarily her powers—she is turned into a lifeless corpse and hung on a peg, 243 much like a piece of meat, without status and without identity. The archaeological record makes it clear that during most of Mesopotamian history, the dead were buried with clothing, jewelry, and other items used during life, which were indicative of a person’s identity. Barrett suggests that these items may have been intended for use both on the journey to and the stay in the Netherworld. 244 One Old Babylonian dowry text mentions four textiles ( tug2 guz-za ), of which two are intended for the grave. 245 This may also be confirmed by a text from Adab in the much earlier pre-Sargonic period (2450-2340 BC), which states that certain goods are given to a woman named Lalla for her use when she dies and “lives buried with him (i.e. her husband).” 246 This suggests that people would keep both their identity and place in society in the Netherworld. Lalla receives four different types of textiles or garments, in

240 Lines 14-16 and 102-104. For a transliteration and translation of this text, see Ibid., 103-181. For an electronic edition of this text, see “Inana’s descent to the nether world” lines 23, 111, 145 (ETCSL no. 1.4.1) http://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk/cgi-bin/etcsl.cgi?text=c.1.4.1&display=Crit&charenc=gcirc#. Some scholars argue that the me and Inana’s items of attire must be equivalent. Sladek, 85.

241 Lines 15 and 103. For a transliteration and translation of this text, see Sladek, 103-181. For an electronic edition of this text, see “Inana’s descent to the nether world” lines 23, 111, 145 (ETCSL no. 1.4.1) http://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk/cgi-bin/etcsl.cgi?text=c.1.4.1&display=Crit&charenc=gcirc#.

242 Lines 25 and 113. For a transliteration and translation of this text, see Ibid. For an electronic edition of this text, see “Inana’s descent to the nether world” lines 23, 111, 145 (ETCSL no. 1.4.1) http://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk/cgi-bin/etcsl.cgi?text=c.1.4.1&display=Crit&charenc=gcirc#.

243 Lines 171-172. For a transliteration and translation of this text, see Ibid. For an electronic edition of this text, see “Inana’s descent to the nether world” lines 23, 111, 145 (ETCSL no. 1.4.1) http://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk/cgi-bin/etcsl.cgi?text=c.1.4.1&display=Crit&charenc=gcirc#.


245 BM 16465, column ii lines 9-10. For a transliteration and translation of this text, see Dalley: 69-73.

246 As pointed out by Andrew Cohen, Death Rituals, Ideology, and the Development of Early Mesopotamian Kingship (Leiden: Styx, 2005), 102. For an electronic edition of this text of this text, see Foxvog, 67-75.
addition to a headband, a bed, a silver spear, a lapis lazuli ornament, and a pair of silver earrings. Her husband, Billalla, a temple administrator of Keš, receives a donkey and chariot, seven different types of textiles or garments, a bed, a copper ax, a silver knife, a silver spear, and a silver crown. The difference in their grave goods reflects the difference in their status and occupation. Both the type and richness of the grave goods varies quite substantially, depending on the identity and status of the individual. While no formal analysis has been done of the relationship between an individual’s identity and status and the grave goods he or she received for the Old Babylonian period, an examination of the grave good shows a wide range of items, as might be expected. At Ur, some graves might contain only beads or a little jewelry, while others contained vessels or tools such as arrowheads, whetstones, spindle whorls, and weights, or even figurines. At Tell ed-Dēr, a similar range of items was found in the graves. A clearer, although earlier example comes from the tomb of an Early Dynastic queen (c. 2600-2450 BC), Puabi, who was dressed in a garment beaded with gold, silver, lapis lazuli, carnelian, and agate. While she wore a substantial amount of jewelry, her grave also contained two oxen-drawn wagons with drivers, and attendants of various kinds. These included guards (with copper daggers and pottery cups) and women (accompanied by musical instruments, including a harp and lyre). Grave goods from more ordinary people might include simply ceramic vessels and tools used by the individual in life, which, if needed in the Netherworld, suggested continuity with this world. That an individual would keep his or her place in society in the Netherworld is also reflected in the literary text “The Death of Ur-Namma”. Ur-Namma, a king, was assigned to be a judge in the Netherworld, alongside of king Gilgamesh. It seems, then that people needed items of dress and other items indicative of their identity to continue that identity in the netherworld. Thus, with the loss of her dress, it seems that Inana would have lost her identity as well.

2.5 Transgressing the Boundaries of Identity: An Explanation for Other Aspects of the Text

Three aspects of the text can be explained by the individual’s transgression of the boundaries of acceptable identity: Inana’s judgment by the Anuna gods, Enlil’s and Nanna’s refusal to help Inana, and Inana’s choice to hand Dumuzi over as a substitute for herself.

247 Foxvog, 67-60.
248 See Woolley and Mallowan, The Old Babylonian Period, 195-213.
249 Gasche, 44-60.
251 Ibid., 34-36.
253 As noted by Barrett: 9.
Scholars generally accept that Inana’s decision to hand over Dumuzi as a substitute for herself was because he alone was not mourning her. More specifically, her actions can be explained by the fact that Dumuzi had transgressed the boundaries of identity, as evidenced by his dress. As noted in section 2.3 above, the three deities who were mourning for Inana—Ninšubur, Šara, and Lulal—were wearing dirty garments in order to mourn her. In contrast, Dumuzi was wearing a magnificent garment. This is especially inappropriate, since Dumuzi is Inana’s husband. A husband, above all others, would be expected to put on proper mourning dress for his wife; his failure to do so is a transgression of his identity as the husband of Inana.

In the same way, Inana’s judgment by the Anuna gods can be explained as a transgression of the boundaries of her identity. As demonstrated in section 2.2 (and its subsections) above, in Inana’s act of dressing, she was actively constructing her identity as a high-ranking goddess of queenly status, with her identity as the goddess of both war and sex. When Ereshkigal tricked her into removing her dress, and thus her identity, although she was powerful enough to push Ereshkigal from her throne and sit down on it, she was judged and punished for it. Since her dress no longer reflected the identity of a queen, it would have been seen as inappropriate behavior for her to sit down on the throne reserved for the ruler of the Netherworld. It is clear that Inana’s transgression of the boundaries of her identity is the reason for this judgment. Both Dumuzi, who transgressed the boundaries of his identity as a mourner, and Inana’s transgression of the boundaries of her identity as one of queenly status, were described in the same way. Compare the two scenes in Table 7.

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254 For example, see Bendt Alster, "The Mythology of Mourning," *ASJ* 5 (1983): 10.
255 Lines 308, 331, and 341. For a transliteration and translation of this text, see Sladek, 103-181. For an electronic edition of this text, see “Inana’s descent to the nether world” lines 23, 111, 145 (ETCSL no. 1.4.1) [http://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk/cgi-bin/etcsl.cgi?text=c.1.4.1&display=Crit&charenc=gcirc#](http://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk/cgi-bin/etcsl.cgi?text=c.1.4.1&display=Crit&charenc=gcirc#).
256 Line 349. For a transliteration and translation of this text, see Ibid. For an electronic edition of this text, see “Inana’s descent to the nether world” lines 23, 111, 145 (ETCSL no. 1.4.1) [http://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk/cgi-bin/etcsl.cgi?text=c.1.4.1&display=Crit&charenc=gcirc#](http://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk/cgi-bin/etcsl.cgi?text=c.1.4.1&display=Crit&charenc=gcirc#).
Table 7: Inana vs. Dumuzi: Dress and sitting on a throne

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>line</th>
<th>The Anuna gods condemn Inana</th>
<th>translation</th>
<th>line</th>
<th>Inana hands over Dumuzi as her substitute</th>
<th>translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>168</td>
<td>igi mu-ši-in-bar igi uš2-a-kam</td>
<td>They looked at her—it was the look of death.</td>
<td>354</td>
<td>igi mu-un-ši-in-bar igi uš2-a-ka</td>
<td>She looked at him; it was the look of death.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>169</td>
<td>inim i-ne-ne inim lipiš gig-ga-am</td>
<td>They spoke to her—it was the speech of anger.</td>
<td>355</td>
<td>inim i-ne-ne inim lipiš gig-ga</td>
<td>She spoke to him; it was the speech of anger</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>170</td>
<td>gu3 i-ne-de2 gu3 nam-tag-tag-ga-am</td>
<td>They shouted at her—it was the shout of heavy guilt</td>
<td>356</td>
<td>gu3 i-ne-de2 gu3 nam-tag-tag-ga</td>
<td>She shouted at him; it was the shout of heavy guilt</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note that the Sumerian is virtually identical; the main difference in translation would be the context, to specify the subject. It cannot be, as some scholars have suggested, that Inana was judged merely for usurping Ereškigal’s throne, an act that deserved the death penalty.\(^\text{257}\) If the act of usurpation alone deserved the death penalty, then it fails to explain why Ereškigal was so worried. Based on Inana’s dress, as demonstrated in section 2.2 (and its subsections) above, it was clear to everyone, especially Ereškigal what Inana’s intent was—to take over the Netherworld. If Ereškigal knew that an act of usurpation would result in judgment of that individual by the Anuna gods, then there was no need to trick Inana into removing her dress, and thus her identity. It is only someone lacking the appropriate identity who would be condemned for usurping the throne of the Netherworld.

Furthermore, compare the dress of Inana and Dumuzi when they sat down on the respective thrones. Dumuzi was wearing a magnificent garment (\textit{tug\textsubscript{2} mah}).\(^\text{258}\) In contrast, Inana was (essentially) naked, which was inappropriate for sitting on a throne. While Dumuzi’s attire was appropriate for sitting on a throne, it was inappropriate for a husband who should have been in mourning.

The idea of identity and judgment are closely related in Sumerian. The noun \textit{nam}, usually translated as “fate, destiny,” can be used to describe one’s identity—one’s

\(^{257}\) For example, see Dina Katz, \textit{The Image of the Netherworld in the Sumerian Sources} (Bethesda, MD: CDL Press, 2003), 262.

\(^{258}\) Line 349. For a transliteration and translation of this text, see Sladek, 103-181. For an electronic edition of this text, see “Inana’s descent to the nether world” lines 23, 111, 145 (ETCSL no. 1.4.1) \url{http://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk/cgi-bin/etcsl.cgi?text=c.1.4.1&display=Crit&charenc=gcirc#}. 
essential characteristics, functions, or sphere of influence.\textsuperscript{259} This makes sense, given that scholars usually derive the word \textit{nam} from the verb \textit{me}, meaning “to be”, from the form *\textit{a-na-am} “what is it?”\textsuperscript{260} or *\textit{na-is-me} “it is so.”\textsuperscript{261} In the late lexical tradition, \textit{nam} is clearly related to the Akkadian verb \textit{bašû}, “to be.”\textsuperscript{262}

The related verb, \textit{nam—tar}, usually translated as “to decree a destiny,” can also be used to establish identity—one’s essential characteristics, functions, or sphere of influence. In “Ninurta’s Exploits,” Aruru reminds Ninurta that he has not fixed the destinies (\textit{na-\textasciitilde{\textacircumflex}\textsuperscript{a}g nu-um-mi-tar}) for each of the various stones.\textsuperscript{263} In doing so, Ninurta is said to “characterize”\textsuperscript{264} (its) ways” (\textit{in-dî bî-ib-kur-ku})\textsuperscript{265} and to “enumerate (its) characteristics” (\textit{a-ra\textasciitilde{\textacircumflex}\textsuperscript{a} bi-ib-šêde}).\textsuperscript{266} In “Enki and Ninmah”, Enki decrees appropriate “fates” for each of the humans that Ninmah creates. Based on each one’s physical characteristics, Enki assigns each a specific function or identity. For example, a woman who could not give birth becomes a weaver in the queen’s household,\textsuperscript{267} while an individual lacking both a penis and a vagina becomes a eunuch serving the king.\textsuperscript{268} In “Enki and the World Order,” Enki also decrees “fates” (i.e. identities) for the various lands: Sumer,\textsuperscript{269} Ur,\textsuperscript{270} and Meluha.\textsuperscript{271}

\textsuperscript{259} As also argued by Polonsky, 169.

\textsuperscript{260} For example, see Adam Falkenstein, "Untersuchungen zur sumerischen Grammatik. 5. Zum Akzent des Sumerischen," ZA 58 (1959): 101.

\textsuperscript{261} Karl Oberhuber, "Review of Farber-Flügge, G. 'Der Mythos "Inanna und Enki"unter besonderer Berücksichtigung der Liste der me.'," OLZ 74 (1979): 450.

\textsuperscript{262} \textit{na-\textasciitilde{\textacircumflex}\textsuperscript{a}m NAM} = [\textit{ba}-\textit{š\textasciitilde{\textacircumflex}\textsuperscript{u}}-\textit{u} in Idu II 64. For a transliteration and translation of this text, see Yushu Gong, "A Homonymous List: Idu II (CT 11, 29-32, D.T. 40)," JAC 9 (2002): 77-97.

\textsuperscript{263} “Ninurta’s Exploits” line 415. For a transliteration and translation of this text, see Johannes J.A. van Dijk, \textit{LUGAL UD ME-LÁM-bi NIR ĠÁL: Texte, Traduction et Introduction. 1. Introduction. Texte Composite. Traduction} (Leiden: Brill, 1983), 51-147. For an electronic edition of this text, see “Ninurta’s exploits” line 415 (ETCSL no. 1.6.2) \url{http://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk/cgi-bin/etcsl.cgi?text=c.1.6.2&display=Crit&charenc=gcirc#}.

\textsuperscript{264} Here, I use Flückiger-Hawker’s translation of the verb \textit{kur-ku}. See Flückiger-Hawker, 181.

\textsuperscript{265} “Ninurta’s Exploits” line 416 and 571 or “Ninurta’s exploits” lines 416 and 568 (ETCSL no. 1.6.2) \url{http://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk/cgi-bin/etcsl.cgi?text=c.1.6.2&display=Crit&charenc=gcirc#}.

\textsuperscript{266} “Ninurta’s Exploits” line 436 or Ninurta’s exploits line 436 (ETCSL no. 1.6.2) \url{http://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk/cgi-bin/etcsl.cgi?text=c.1.6.2&display=Crit&charenc=gcirc#}.

\textsuperscript{267} “Enki and Ninmah” lines 72-74. For a transliteration and translation of this text, see Benito, 21-44. For an electronic edition of this text, see “Enki and Ninmah” lines 72-74 (ETCSL no. 1.1.2) \url{http://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk/cgi-bin/etcsl.cgi?text=c.1.1.2&display=Crit&charenc=gcirc#}.

\textsuperscript{268} “Enki and Ninmah” lines 75-78

\textsuperscript{269} “Enki and the World Order” lines 192-209. For a transliteration and translation of this text, see Benito, 85-137. For an electronic edition of this text, see “Enki and the world
The other aspect of nam—tar, however, is the idea of judgment. Polonsky, who has done an extensive study of the term, concludes that nam—tar is used both to punish wrongdoing and to reward proper behavior.²⁷² In “Ninurta’s Exploits,” the concepts of judgment and identity come together. The various stones either receive a good or bad “fate” (description and function, i.e. identity), depending on whether the stone supported Ninurta or fought against him. For example, the **na-ka-gin-na** (hematite) receives a good “fate” (identity) as a stone that will, among other things, be valued by craftsmen, since it did not rebel against Ninurta.²⁷³ On the other hand, the **na-algameš** receives a bad “fate” (identity) as a stone that will be used in Ninurta’s forge.²⁷⁴ Thus, Inana, whose behavior in transgressing the bounds of her identity, would have been justly punished by the Anuna gods for her attempt to illegitimately usurp Ereškigal’s throne, given that in her stripped condition, the Anuna gods believed she lacked the proper identity to do so. And her punishment was fitting—she became a corpse that was hung on a hook, like a piece of meat lacking identity. Admittedly, the term nam—tar is not used to describe what the Anuna gods do to Inana. The verb is di—kud, “to judge.”²⁷⁵ Polonsky, however, argues that because of their parallel usage, nam—tar and di—kud become synonymous for decrees of fate.²⁷⁶ Thus, in judging Inana, the Anuna gods gave her a fate in keeping with her (un)dressed identity—that of a corpse, without identity.

The final aspect of the text that can be explained by a transgression of the boundaries of identity is Enlil’s and Nanna’s refusal to help Inana. Without this explanation, their responses to Ninurta or fought against him. For example, the **na-ka-gin-na** (hematite) receives a good “fate” (identity) as a stone that will, among other things, be valued by craftsmen, since it did not rebel against Ninurta.²⁷³ On the other hand, the **na-algameš** receives a bad “fate” (identity) as a stone that will be used in Ninurta’s forge.²⁷⁴ Thus, Inana, whose behavior in transgressing the bounds of her identity, would have been justly punished by the Anuna gods for her attempt to illegitimately usurp Ereškigal’s throne, given that in her stripped condition, the Anuna gods believed she lacked the proper identity to do so. And her punishment was fitting—she became a corpse that was hung on a hook, like a piece of meat lacking identity. Admittedly, the term nam—tar is not used to describe what the Anuna gods do to Inana. The verb is di—kud, “to judge.”²⁷⁵ Polonsky, however, argues that because of their parallel usage, nam—tar and di—kud become synonymous for decrees of fate.²⁷⁶ Thus, in judging Inana, the Anuna gods gave her a fate in keeping with her (un)dressed identity—that of a corpse, without identity.

The final aspect of the text that can be explained by a transgression of the boundaries of identity is Enlil’s and Nanna’s refusal to help Inana. Without this explanation, their responses to Ninšubur’s request for help for Inana are puzzling:

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190 [a-a] [d]e-n-lī₂ ṵi-piš bāl-a-nī d nin-šubur-ra-ke₄ mu-na-ni-ib-gi₄-gi₄
dišubur's request for help for Inana are puzzling: ²⁷⁶
191 [dumu-šu₁₀] a-na ga₄-ši₂-in-dug₄ ki g₃ ar₄ b₃ i₂-in-dug₄,
192 [“i-nana] a-na g₃ ar₄ b₃ i₂-in-dug₄ ki g₃ ar₄ b₃ i₂-in-dug₄,
193 me k₃ ur-ra me a₄ u₄-di-da s₃ a₂ b₃ i₂-in-dug₄-[g₃ a₄ u₄ k₃ r]e he₂-eb-us₂
194 a-ba-am₃ ki-bi s₃ a₂ in-na-an-dug₄ [e₃ d₃ e₃] a₄ u₄ ni-in-dug₄
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²⁷⁰ “Enki and the World Order” lines 212-218
²⁷¹ “Enki and the World Order” lines 221-237
²⁷² Polonsky, 169.
²⁷³ “Ninurta’s Exploits” lines 497-512. For a transliteration and translation of this text, see van Dijk, **Lugal Ud Me-Lâm**-Bi **Nir Gál**: Texte, Traduction et Introduction. I. Introduction. Texte Composite. Traduction, 51-147. For an electronic edition of this text, see “Ninurta’s exploits” lines 497-511 (ETCSL no. 1.6.2) [http://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk/cgi-bin/etcsl.cgi?text=c.1.6.2&display=Crit&charenc=gcirc#].
²⁷⁴ “Ninurta’s Exploits” lines 524-530 or “Ninurta’s exploits” lines 522-527 (ETCSL no. 1.6.2) [http://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk/cgi-bin/etcsl.cgi?text=c.1.6.2&display=Crit&charenc=gcirc#].
²⁷⁵ Line 167. For a transliteration and translation of this text, see Sladek, 103-181. For an electronic edition of this text, see “Inana’s descent to the nether world” lines 23, 111, 145 (ETCSL no. 1.4.1) [http://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk/cgi-bin/etcsl.cgi?text=c.1.4.1&display=Crit&charenc=gcirc#].
²⁷⁶ Polonsky, 80-82.
Father Enlil answered Ninšubur in his anger:
“My daughter desired the great above, and she desired the great below.
Inana desired the great above, and she desired the great below.
The me of the netherworld are me that should not be desired, for whoever attains them, let that one remain in the netherworld.
Who, having reached that place, could demand (desire) to come up?”

Katz argues that Inana, in seizing Ereškigal’s throne, also took the me of queenship of the Netherworld. For this, Enlil (and presumably Nanna) implied, in Katz’s words, that she was “doomed to remain in the Netherworld as a spiritless corpse.” If the me of queenship of the Netherworld requires one to stay there, then Inana would have known that her desire to become the ruler of the netherworld would have been incompatible with her desire to return from the netherworld. In other words, Inana could not have expected to both take on the identity of the ruler of the netherworld and return from the netherworld. Since Enki found a way for Inana to escape, however, this cannot be the reason for Enlil’s and Nanna’s refusal to help her. Furthermore, as argued earlier in this section, the Anuna gods judged her for acting inappropriately based on her (un)dressed identity. So, since the Anuna gods had already punished Inana for her transgression, why were Enlil and Nanna still so angry? The issue must be that Inana, in attempting to seize the me of the netherworld, had overstepped the boundaries of her natural identity and attempted to take on a new identity. But can the term me be used to express identity in Mesopotamia? If identity includes one’s characteristic features, functions, or spheres of influence, then it does seem to be used in this way. Scholars do not agree as to whether or not the noun me is related to the verb me; nevertheless, the noun me seems to carry

278 For example, Gragg suggests a possible connection between the noun me and the copula. See Gene Gragg, "The Syntax of the Copula in Sumerian," in The Verb 'Be' and Its Synonyms (Dordrecht, Holland: D. Reidel, 1968), 102-103. On the other hand, one objection to the relationship between the two is that in Emesal, the noun is written as me, but the copula is -gēn. See Gertrud Farber, "ME," in RIA 7. Libanušabaš -- Medizin. (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1990), 611. The evidence she cites comes from Joachim
with it the idea of being, and hence would be appropriate for using to describe characteristic features, functions, or spheres of influence. Deities are assigned specific me from among all the me, which suggests that me are one of the things that differentiate them from each other. The me of one city are clearly distinct from the me of other cities. In “Inana and Enki,” Inana tricks Enki into giving her the me; these include character traits such as heroism, wickedness, and righteousness. The me are closely related to the idea of “fate” (see discussion on nam—tar earlier in this section). When the gods decide to destroy Sumer, they overturn its me. Deities are also said to determine a temple’s me. Enlil and Nanna, then, must have thought that Inana’s punishment was fitting—for her transgression, she not only lost the identity of queen of the Netherworld (along with the rest of her identity, as she was undressed), but also, like the queen of the Netherworld, was forced to stay in the Netherworld.


280 "Išme-Dagan M" Rev. 3'. For a transliteration and translation of this text, see Mark Glenn Hall, “A Study of the Sumerian Moon-God, Nanna/Suen” (Ph.D. diss., University of Pennsylvania, 1985), 802-808. For an electronic edition of this text, see “An adab to Nanna for Išme-Dagan (Išme-Dagan M) Segment B line 3 line (ETCSL no. 2.5.4.13)

http://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk/cgi-bin/etcsl.cgi?text=c.2.5.4.13&display=Crit&charenc=gcirc#.


282 “Inana and Enki” Tablet I Column iii line 2. For a transliteration and translation of this text, see Farber-Flügge, 16-63. For an electronic edition of this text, see “Inana and Enki” Segment D line 2 (ETCSL no. 1.3.1) http://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk/cgi-bin/etcsl.cgi?text=c.1.3.1&display=Crit&charenc=gcirc#.

283 “The Lamentation over the Destruction of Sumer and Ur” line 3. For a transliteration and translation of this text, see Piotr Michalowski, The Lamentation over the Destruction of Sumer and Ur, MC 1 (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1989), 36-69. For an electronic edition of this text, see “The lament for Sumer and Urim” line 3 (ETCSL no. 2.2.3) http://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk/cgi-bin/etcsl.cgi?text=c.2.2.3&display=Crit&charenc=gcirc#.

284 “The Sumerian Temple Hymns” line 381. For a transliteration and translation of this text, see Åke W. Sjöberg and E. Bergmann, "The Collection of the Sumerian Temple Hymns," in The Collection of the Sumerian Temple Hymns, TCS 3 (Locust Valley, NY: J.J. Augustin, 1969), 17-49. For an electronic edition of this text, see “The temple hymns” line 381 (ETCSL no. 4.80.1) http://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk/cgi-bin/etcsl.cgi?text=c.4.80.1&display=Crit&charenc=gcirc#.
2.6 Conclusion

Thus, it seems that identity, as constructed through dress, plays a key role in explaining various aspects of “Inana’s Descent to the Netherworld.” Inana, in her act of dressing, puts on her identity as a high-ranking goddess of queenly status, along with her identity as the goddess of war and sex. The aspect of her identity that is missing is that of Venus, the morning star. Not only does her dress make it clear that her intention is to take over the Netherworld, in contradiction to her assertion that she is at the Netherworld to attend the funeral of her brother-in-law, but it also makes it clear that she is lying about being “Inana going toward the east/sunrise,” since Venus would have no reason for being at the gate of the Netherworld. Ereškigal tricks her into removing her identity, not her powers, at each gate of the Netherworld. As a result, although Inana has enough power to push Ereškigal off of her throne and to sit down on it, since she has lost her identity as a high-ranking goddess of queenly status, her usurpation of the throne is a transgression of the boundaries of her identity. She is judged for it, and fittingly, punished by being turned into a corpse that is hung on a hook like a piece of meat, without status or identity. Inana’s desire to push beyond her own identity to also become queen of the netherworld, is the transgression that angered Enlil and Nanna, triggering their refusal to help her. Finally, Dumuzi’s lack of mourning attire is a transgression of his identity as Inana’s husband, and stands in stark contrast to the mourning dress of Ninšubur, Šara, and Lula. For this reason, Inana hands Dumuzi over to the demons as a substitute for herself. The text ends with praise to Ereškigal, the one who successfully fought for—and maintained—her rightful identity as ruler of the Netherworld.285

Note that Ereškigal, whose shoulders are not covered (line 232) and whose hair is “bunched up like leeks” (line 235) seems to be dressed appropriately in the identity of a mourner for her husband. For a transliteration and translation of this text, see Sladek, 103-181. For an electronic edition of this text, see “Inana’s descent to the nether world” lines 23, 111, 145 (ETCSL no. 1.4.1) http://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk/cgi-bin/etcsl.cgi?text=c.1.4.1&display=Crit&charenc=gcirc#.
CHAPTER 3

DRESS AND IDENTITY IN LEGAL CONTEXTS: THE HEM OF THE GARMENT

3.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I explore the way dress can be used to construct legal identity in the Old Babylonian period by focusing on one item of dress, the hem of the garment, and demonstrate that it plays a role in altering legal identity, which has implications for the rights and responsibilities of the person in question. In the first section, I argue that the hem of the garment is an item of dress that communicates identity (dress as material object approach). The hem is not merely a personality symbol that can stand in place of the person; rather, it is functionally equivalent to a cylinder seal in confirming the legal identity of the individual involved in the matter, whether as a party or as a witness to the transaction. This legal identity carries with it a legal obligation by the party who sealed or a responsibility to authenticate the transaction by the witness who sealed. In the second section, I argue that since the hem of the garment communicates legal identity, it can be manipulated to change both familial identity and marital status. First, tying the termatun in the woman’s hem, one of the early stages in marriage in the Old Babylonian period, serves two purposes: 1) It transfers the woman from her family of origin to her husband’s family, altering her familial affiliation and her marital status and 2) It confirms her children’s identity as members of her husband’s family. Second, cutting the woman’s hem in the case of divorce reverses the process of tying the termatun in the woman’s hem in marriage. It changes her familial affiliation and identity, transferring her out of her husband’s family and causing her to lose her identity as a wife. These changes in identity are significant because they have legal implications for inheritance, support, and disposition of the marital property.

There are three words for “hem” in Akkadian, qannum, sissiktum, and sikkum. The word sissiktum is used in three contexts in the Old Babylonian legal texts: when a hem is used in lieu of a seal, when a wife’s hem is cut in divorce, and only once when the termatun is tied in the bride’s hem; qannum is normally used in this third circumstance. (The word sikkum is exclusively Assyrian, used during the Old Assyrian and the Neo-Assyrian periods.)

Although various items of dress appear in many legal contexts, I have chosen to focus on the use of the hem of the garment for two reasons. First, the use of the hem in legal texts is mostly limited to a narrow time period, the Old Babylonian period.

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286 The termatun, often translated as “bridewealth,” was something (usually money, but it could include other items) given by the groom’s family to the bride’s family as part of the marriage process. The purpose of the termatun is debated; I will discuss this in detail in sections 3.3.1.2-3.3.1.5 below.

287 See CAD S p. 254-255.

288 There are three texts from Middle Babylonian Nippur (BE 14, 86, BE 15, 30, and BE 15, 55) in which an individual’s hem is used in lieu of a seal. See Meir Malul, Studies in Mesopotamian Legal Symbolism (Kevelaer and Neukirchen-Vluyn: Butzon & Bercker; Neukirchener Verlag, 1988), 299 n. 42.
Second, when the hem of the garment is mentioned in a text during the Old Babylonian period, with one exception, it never refers to the hem of a garment worn (or intended to be worn) in everyday use in ordinary textile contexts. Instead, the hem of the garment appears in highly specialized contexts. In addition to the legal uses, as described earlier in the previous paragraphs, the hem appears in two other contexts during the Old Babylonian period: in divination and in showing subordination to a god or a king. The majority of the evidence for the use of hems in legal contexts comes from Old Babylonian Sippar, although evidence from other places (or on occasion, other time periods) will be considered as well, when it sheds light on the Sippar material.

Previous scholars have considered the hem as a “personality symbol” (a symbol which stands for the person). Because of its closeness to the body, the hem may have been considered as part of the body, such as the hair or the nails, and been used to symbolize the whole person (the semiotic approach). My approach differs from these

289 One Old Babylonian literary text, UET 6 414:4, 9 and 21, mentions the hem of the garment. The text portrays a man who goes into excruciating detail about how his garment should be cleaned and otherwise treated, both its specific parts (including the hem) and as a whole. For an edition of this text, see C. J. Gadd, "Two Sketches from the Life at Ur," *Iraq* 25 (1963): 183-185. One is left with the impression, however, that the hem here serves not as an item that is important in its own right, but rather as an example of the ridiculous demands that the man is making to the cleaner.

290 The word *sissiktum* is used during the Old Assyrian period in this way. For references, see CAD S p. 324.

291 For examples of *qannum*, see CAD Q p. 83-85. For examples of *sissiktum*, see CAD S p. 322-325.

292 There are several texts, one from Old Babylonian Nippur (Stone and Zimanski no. 35) and seven texts from Mari (ARM 8 1, 8 32, 8 34, 8 49, 8 57, 8 72, 8 81) in which an individual’s hem is used in lieu of a seal. See Malul, 299 n. 42. Five texts from Nuzi also reflect the custom of tying money in the bride’s hem (AASOR 16 55, Gadd no. 42, HSS 5 80, HSS 19 7, HSS 19 44, JEN 78). See Malul, 180 n. 76. Two texts from Nuzi (HSS 19 136, Gadd no. 33) mention cutting the wife’s hem in the case of divorce. See Malul, 197 n. 27.

293 Malul, 152. Malul follows Godfrey Rolles Driver, and Miles, John C., *The Babylonian Laws*, vol. I: Legal Commentary (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1952), 291; Paul Koschaker, "Kleidersymbolik in Keilschriftrechten," in *Actes du XXe Congrès international des Orientalistes, Bruxelles, Sep. 1938* (Louvain: Bureaux du muséon, 1938), 117ff; Paul Koschaker, "Persönlichkeitzeichnen," Forschungen und Fortschritte 18 (1942): 246ff; J. Lewy, "Les textes paléo-assyriens," *RHR* 110 (1934): 30ff. Professor C. Kronfeld has pointed out to me that using the hem to stand for a person is more precisely a metonymy rather than a symbol. In metonymy, one word or phrase is used in place of another word or phrase with which it is closely associated. For example, "Hollywood" might be used to refer to the entire U.S. film industry. Since all previous literature uses the term “symbol,” however, I will use it here.

earlier studies in treating the hem not as a symbol, per se, but rather as a literal and concrete item of dress (dress as material object approach) that can be manipulated to express something about a person’s identity (use of dress in the active construction of identity approach). My question, then, is not “What does a hem symbolize?” but “How is a hem used to construct a person’s identity?” I do not think that these approaches are necessarily mutually exclusive; both may be possible. The difference is whose perception is the focus of the analysis. To illustrate this distinction, take for example, rings exchanged during a contemporary wedding ceremony in the U.S. Vows spoken during the ring exchange might refer to the ring as a symbol of eternity (because it has no beginning or end), as a symbol of love and faithfulness, or as a symbol of the promises exchanged, etc. (semiotic approach). When worn, however, the ring announces to all who see it that the wearer is married, an identity with both legal and social implications (dress as material object approach). At the same time, as with other items of dress, a wedding ring can be used to manipulate identity as well. A single woman might don a wedding ring to present herself as a married woman, in order to discourage unwanted attention from men. A married person might remove a wedding band in order to cultivate an extra-marital relationship. Although same-sex marriages are not yet legally recognized in the U.S. by most states or by the federal government, the members of such a couple might wear wedding rings as a public declaration of their commitment to the relationship (dress used in the active construction of identity approach). Since it is not always possible to discern what a hem might symbolize to an individual living in ancient Mesopotamia, I intend to focus on what commonly accepted aspects of legal identity were being expressed by the use of the hem, and how these were used to alter legal identity.

3.2 Hem as a Marker of Legal Identity

In this section, I argue that the hem of the garment is an item of dress that communicates identity (dress as material object approach). I begin by arguing that a hem is not merely a symbol for the person. Next, I contend that hems, like cylinder seals, can be used to communicate the legal identity of the individual involved in the matter, whether as a party or as a witness to the transaction. This legal identity carries with it a legal obligation of the party who sealed or a responsibility to authenticate the transaction by the witness who sealed. I start with a general discussion on sealing in the Old Babylonian period. I then demonstrate that hems can be substituted for cylinder seals because of their similarity, and then argue that a hem is functionally equivalent to a cylinder seal in usage.

3.2.1 Hem as More than a Symbol for the Person

In this section, I argue that while the hem can function as a symbol for the person in certain contexts, it is not the only way that the hem of the garment is used; rather,
when a hem is used in lieu of a cylinder seal, the hem is a marker of identity (dress as material object approach). Some might argue that the hem of the garment and the cylinder seal are symbols for the person because both are used for magical or other purposes. (This is the semiotic approach described in the introduction.) In certain ritual or prophetic contexts, it appears that the hem of the garment could literally stand in for the person. Many scholars suggest, for example, that the hem of the garment, along with a lock of hair, could stand in for the prophet in his or her absence in Old Babylonian Mari. The lock of hair and the hem of the garment would be sent to the king along with the divinatory report from the prophet. Divination could be performed for an individual who was not present, by using the individual’s hair and hem to represent the client while the extispicy was being performed. This is attested both in the Old Babylonian period and the Neo-Assyrian period. Both the hem of the garment and cylinder seals could also be used in treating sickness.

Most of this evidence, however, comes from the first millennium, and thus is much later than the evidence for the use of hems to seal legal documents. Furthermore, the contexts in which hems and cylinder seals were able to stand in for the person are very different than the context of using a hem or a cylinder seal to seal a legal document. Even if we were to assume that hems and cylinder seals functioned in the same way in ritual and divinatory contexts during the Old Babylonian period as they did in the later periods, since this is a different (legal) context, one would need to prove, rather than assume, that hems and cylinder seals function the same way in legal contexts as they do in ritual and divinatory contexts.

Furthermore, there are additional ways in which the hem functions in other contexts. For example, witches could use the hem of someone’s garment to work magic against them. In the anthropological study of ritual and magic, one important principle is the law of contact, also called contagious magic. According to this principle, things that have been in contact with each other will continue to affect each other, even at a distance. Thus, in the case of witchcraft, the hem of the garment that has been worn by an individual, or even a person’s fingernails or hair, can be used to cause illness or other harm to the individual to whom these items belong. More recently, scholars have come up with alternative explanations for the use of hair and hem in divinatory texts. M. J. Lynch has argued that the hair and hem were two additional “data points” on which

297 E.g., LKA 70 iv 13. Evidence comes from both the Middle Babylonian period and the Neo-Assyrian period. See Ibid., 15-16.
299 E.g., Maqlu I 133.
extispicy was performed in order to verify extispicy performed by other means.\textsuperscript{301} Considering the hem of the garment as a mere symbol for the person in all contexts, then, seems too narrow.

More importantly, however, I suggest that if both cylinder seals and hems are functioning as items of dress (in the broad sense of additions to the body, as defined in the introduction) in the context of the Old Babylonian legal documents, then their use goes beyond being a mere symbol for the person; they can function as markers of identity. The evidence for cylinder seals being items of dress is as follows. Except for the earliest cylinder seals (i.e. the Uruk and Jemdet Nasr periods), cylinder seals were generally perforated through the axis, allowing them to be worn.\textsuperscript{302} During the Early Dynastic period, pictorial evidence shows that women either wore cylinder seals dangling from their wrists, on pins used to fasten their garments, or as part of a string of beads that hung from these pins. In the royal cemetery at Ur, crossed gold pins, from which the cylinder seal of Queen Puabi was suspended, were found.\textsuperscript{303} While there is no clear pictorial evidence to show how cylinder seals were worn during the Old Babylonian period, the continued presence of the axial perforation suggests that cylinder seals continued to be worn.\textsuperscript{304}

As items of dress that can be worn, both cylinder seals and hems are material objects that can be used to communicate identity. K. Van der Toorn considers cylinder seals to be the equivalent of a modern identity card or document.\textsuperscript{305} While many countries may require that its citizens carry an identity card at all times, however, such identity cards are not usually conspicuously worn, except perhaps in institutional settings in which security, and thus keeping out outsiders, is of the utmost concern. So why would the Mesopotamians wear something that is so clearly associated with legal identity? Like the hem of the garment, ownership and use of cylinder seals was not limited to a particular social status or economic level. Even slaves could own seals.\textsuperscript{306}

The main difference between seals belonging to people of different socio-economic

\textsuperscript{303} Woolley, The Royal Cemetery, 243, 247.
\textsuperscript{304} N. Veldhuis has pointed out to me that the Sumerian word for “wrist,” kišib-la₂, is literally “where the seal hangs.”
\textsuperscript{305} van der Toorn, Family Religion in Babylonia, Syria, and Israel, 66.
\textsuperscript{306} Seals owned by slaves are clearly attested in the Ur III period (e.g., PBS 8/2 157 + NATN 3; BM 17822) and the Neo-Babylonian period. See Piotr Steinkeller, "Seal Practice in the Ur III Period," in Seals and Sealing in the Ancient Near East, ed. McGuire Gibson and Robert D. Biggs, Bibliotheca Mesopotamica 6 (Malibu, CA: Undena Publications, 1977), 45, 48, 52 n. 51-52.
classes may have been in the materials used. During the Old Babylonian period, hematite was favored, although seals were also made of black limestone, crystal, amethyst, obsidian, jasper, cornelian, agate, and even clay.\(^{307}\) Obviously, someone of a higher socio-economic class might have a seal made out of a more expensive or rare type of stone. In the same way, it is possible that the finish or other characteristic of the hem might say something about the social status or economic level of the owner. While not all hem impressions have been published, Boyer describes one hem impression (ARM 81) as having three circular marks, about 5mm in diameter and 3-4 mm deep. He speculates that it was some sort of decorative insertion that also functioned to prevent the hem from fraying.\(^{308}\)

In addition, in the same way that a person, finances permitting, could have more than one garment, a person could have more than one cylinder seal. In Old Babylonian Sippar, a scribe named Sîn-nadin-šumi used at least four different seals over the course of his career. First, he used his father’s seal, until finally acquiring a seal of his own, identifying himself as “Sîn-nadin-šumi, scribe, son of Ipiq-Aya, servant of Enki.” He also uses at least two seals with this same legend, containing the image of a lahmu (a protective deity associated with Enki) in the middle of the second line of the legend. Finally, later in life, he uses another seal with a slightly different legend, this time identifying himself instead as “servant of Ea” (the Akkadian name for Enki).\(^{309}\)

Further, if cylinder seals are worn, then, like hems, they are used in their normal setting in the Old Babylonian legal texts. In contrast, in the context of the magical and divinatory texts, the cylinder seals, like hems, are no longer worn, but physically separated from the owner; in the case of hems, they are literally severed from their natural settings. Thus, if both hems and cylinder seals are items of dress, and being used as items of dress in the texts, then they may be expressing something about the individual’s identity, rather than being a mere symbol for the person, being able to stand in for the individual in question. I will next examine the use of the hem in lieu of a seal, to demonstrate that as with all items of dress, they can communicate some aspect of identity.


\(^{308}\) Georges Boyer, *Textes Juridiques*, ed. André Parrot and Georges Dossin, Archives Royales de Mari VIII (Paris: Imprimerie Nationale, 1958), 161-162. In this case, the name of the individual whose hem was impressed on the tablet is not preserved, so nothing about this person’s status can be stated definitively.

\(^{309}\) Frans van Koppen, "The Scribe of the Flood Story and His Circle," in *The Oxford Handbook of Cuneiform Culture* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 157-159. During the Ur III period, Ur-Šara of Umma had at least three different seals that he used throughout his administrative career. See Steinkeller, "Seal Practice in the Ur III Period," 47-48, 52 n. 49.
3.2.2 The Use of the Hem in Lieu of a Seal

In this section, I demonstrate that a hem, like a cylinder seal, can be used to communicate legal identity. I start with a general discussion of sealing practices, then discuss the texts in which a hem is used in lieu of a seal. I argue that a hem can be used in lieu of a seal because of the similarities between the two.

3.2.2.1 Sealing

During the Old Babylonian period, legal documents were frequently sealed. Gelb defines a seal as:

Any device, of whatever material, form, and size,
a) bearing distinctive markings (representational and identifying symbols and signs of writing) so made that they can impart an impression upon a substance, b) having the purpose of identifying the user of the device, and c) thereby of legalizing or validating the object (document) bearing the impression.  

The envelope, rather than the document itself, was typically sealed; however, since the envelope is often either missing or damaged, the evidence for sealing practices is incomplete; nevertheless, a few generalizations can be made. Normally, a cylinder seal was rolled into the still-damp clay of the tablet. The individuals who sealed the tablet were either witnesses or one of the principal parties who either gave up a right (e.g. the seller) or assumed an obligation (e.g. the borrower). If both parties had mutual obligations (e.g. marriage), both might seal the document. The seal impression indicated that the seal-owner accepted or notarized the terms of the document, in the case of the party or parties involved, or confirmed the presence of the individual, in the case of the witnesses, who could later be called on to confirm the actions carried out or decisions made in the document. In his study on family religion in the Old Babylonian period, K. van der Toorn argues that the cylinder seal itself functioned much like a modern identity card or document. During the Old Babylonian period, in addition to the scene or design depicted on the seal, the seal often included a legend consisting of the name of the owner, his father’s name, and the name of his family god. Van der Toorn suggests that these three pieces of data constitute the most elemental aspects of a person’s identity.

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312 Ibid., 76.
313 van der Toorn, Family Religion in Babylonia, Syria, and Israel, 66.
314 Ibid.
It is essential to distinguish an individual’s legal identity from other aspects of his identity, such as his or her professional identity. Despite the fact that identity was changeable, an individual could still use a cylinder seal with a legend indicating his earlier professional identity in legal transactions. For example, during the Old Babylonian period at Sippar, Iddin-Ea and his brother Ipqu-Annunitum, in their function as judges, continued to use seals identifying themselves as “servant of Ammi-ditana” even during the reign of the following king, Ammi-šaduqa.  

Because of the legal implications of the use of a cylinder seal, the loss of a seal was serious. One text from the Old Babylonian period, dated to the 23rd year of Ammi-ditana’s reign, records the loss of a seal belonging to one Šilli-Uraš on the first day of the eleventh month.  

Occasionally, however, we see the impression of a hem, rather than a cylinder seal, pressed into the clay. This practice will be discussed in the following section.

3.2.2.2 Hem in Lieu of a Seal: The Evidence

In the Old Babylonian period, the phenomenon of a hem being impressed on a legal text instead of a cylinder seal appears occasionally. See Figure 2.

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315 van Koppen, 159. During the earlier Ur III period, the legend on a seal belonging Utu-mu of Lagaš identifies his profession as nu-bandās, often translated as “overseer,” but in the text of the tablet itself (MVN 2 61), he is a šabra or “chief administrator (of a temple).” See Steinkeller, "Seal Practice in the Ur III Period," 47. A seal belonging to Lugal-uruda identifies him as a sag-DUN3 (“recorder”) of the god Nindara, even though the text (MVN 2 137) refers to him as the sanga (“[a kind of] official or chief administrator”) of Nindara. See Steinkeller, "Seal Practice in the Ur III Period," 47.

316 William W. Hallo, "Seals Lost and Found," in *Seals and Sealing in the Ancient Near East*, ed. McGuire Gibson and Robert D. Biggs, Bibliotheca Mesopotamica 6 (Malibu, CA: Undena Publications, 1977), 57. A literary text from the earlier Ur III period describes how after Ur-dun, the merchant, lost his inscribed seal, a herald blew a horn in the streets in order to let people know that the seal would no longer be valid for legal transactions. This text is attested in several exemplars: UM 29.16.139+; PBS 5 65; CBS 13968; SLTN 131; UM 29.15.384; YBC 12074; NBC 7800. See Hallo, 56; Alexandra Kleinerman, “Education in Early 2nd Millennium BC Babylonia: The Sumerian Espistolary Miscellany” (Ph.D. diss., Johns Hopkins University, 2009), 42; Steinkeller, "Seal Practice in the Ur III Period," 49. G. Spada has published an Old Babylonian prism from a private collection, which contains this text as well. See Gabriella Spada, "A Handbook from the Eduba’a: An Old Babylonian Collection of Model Contracts," ZA 101 (2011): 238-239.

317 The majority of the instances of hem impressions come from Old Babylonian Sippar or Mari, although there is one exemplar from Old Babylonian Nippur. There are even a few from Middle Babylonian Nippur. See Malul, 299. A few instances occur where fingernail impressions are used in lieu of seals on lease documents in the Old Babylonian period (e.g., BM 82260, BM 82097). See Beatrice Teissier, "Sealing and Seals: Seal-Impressions from the Reign of Hammurabi on Tablets from Sippar in the British Museum," *Iraq* 60 (1998): 112 n. 27.
Hem impressions often appear alongside of seal impressions in the same tablet. In fact, the two are sometimes treated as interchangeable. While hem impressions are normally accompanied by the phrase “sissiki PN” (“hem of PN”), on occasion the phrase “kišib PN” (“seal of PN”) appears instead. Boyer notes that the logogram DUB (which can easily be confused with the similar logogram KIŠIB) seems to be used to indicate impressions of seals, hems, and fingernails in Mari. Thus, since the Old Babylonian texts sometimes call hems “seals,” or even use the same logogram to indicate both hems, and seals, it seems that they are interchangeable with each other.

But are hems and cylinder seals equivalent in usage as well? Or are hems used in different circumstances? I suggest that there is no evidence for a different nuance in the use of a hem instead of a cylinder seal.

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318 E.g., VAS 8 18, VAS 9 83, TCL 1, 76, ARM 8 32, 8 72, 8 81.
319 E.g., VAS 8 94, TCL 1 79.
320 Boyer, 4-5 n. 2. Note that the use of the logograms (signs) KIŠIB and DUB to indicate various kinds of sealing (seal, hem, and fingernail) is a semiotic activity; this use exemplifies why the semiotic approach is so broadly used among scholars who study ancient Mesopotamia.
321 In fact, who seals a document is not always consistent during the Old Babylonian period. Sealing practices differ from city to city, or even within a city itself. In Old Babylonian Sippar, for example, where many of these documents come from, mostly witnesses affixed their seal to various documents. In sale documents, only occasionally did the seller seal as well. In one text (CT 47 40), the man who gives up a child for adoption (but not his wife) seals alongside of the witnesses. In rental agreements, many were sealed by the farmer or tenant, sometimes alongside of witnesses. On some but not
Both seal and hem impressions seem to serve the same function, that of confirming the legal identity of the individual involved in the matter, whether as a party or as a witness to the transaction. This legal identity carries with it a legal obligation by the party who sealed or a responsibility to authenticate the transaction by the witness who sealed. Admittedly, hems are used in a limited geographical area (Sippar, Mari, Nippur) during a narrow time period (mostly during the Old Babylonian period, although there are three instances of its use during the Middle Babylonian period).\(^{322}\) Nevertheless, the hem is used in a wide variety of transactions, although the majority of them are loans. The evidence is summarized in Table 8.

Table 8: Evidence for Hem in Lieu of a Seal

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Transaction</th>
<th>Number of Occurrences</th>
<th>Provenance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Loan</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Sippar,(^{323}) Mari(^{124})</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hire of female slave for the harvest</td>
<td>1′</td>
<td>Sippar(^{325})</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dispute over property</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Sippar(^{326})</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sale of an empty plot</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Sippar(^{327})</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adoption</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Mari(^{328})</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pledge</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Mari(^{329})</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Receipt of Silver</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Mari(^{330})</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sale of field</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Nippur(^{331})</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All occasions, loan documents were sealed only by the borrower. See W. F. Leemans, "La fonction des sceaux des contrats vieux-babyloniens," in ZIKIR ŠUMIM. Assyriological Studies Presented to F. R. Kraus on the Occasion of his Seventieth Birthday, ed. G. van Driel et al. (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1982), 234-235. The abbreviated nature of these legal documents makes it almost impossible to discern why one individual (e.g., the seller) sealed a tablet, while the equivalent individual (e.g., the seller) in a similar transaction did not. It would be correspondingly much more difficult to discern why one individual sealed using a hem rather than a seal in similar transactions.

\(^{322}\) BE 14 86, BE 15 30, BE 15 55.

\(^{323}\) VAS 8 94, VAS 8 107, VAS 9 83, TCL 1 79

\(^{324}\) ARM 8 32, ARM 8 34, ARM 8 49, ARM 8 57

\(^{325}\) VAS 8 100

\(^{326}\) VAS 8 18 (VAT 1473)

\(^{327}\) TCL 1 76

\(^{328}\) ARM 8 1

\(^{329}\) ARM 8 72

\(^{330}\) ARM 8 81

\(^{331}\) Elizabeth C. Stone and Paul E. Zimansky, Old Babylonian Contracts from Nippur, 1: Selected Texts from the University Museum, University of Pennsylvania., Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago, Microfiche Archives, 1 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1976), no. 35.
Malul argues, however, that the use of the hem instead of a cylinder seal has a specific legal nuance, namely that the sealer is undertaking certain obligations, specifically a guarantee of personal liability. I find his interpretation difficult for several reasons. First, as Malul himself points out, undertaking an obligation or giving up a right are the normal functions of sealing in legal texts. It is not clear how Malul sees using a hem as different from using a cylinder seal. Malul argues that cylinder seals can be used in contexts in which hems are never used, such as to seal jars or other objects or to seal a letter containing an order. He is mistaken, however, in stating that hems are never used to notarize administrative texts such as receipts. One text from Mari, ARM 8 81, is a receipt for five shekels of silver, sealed by the receiver with his hem. Furthermore, while there are no existing letters sealed with a hem, one Old Babylonian letter demands that the recipient of the letter send a hem and an answer to the tablet. It is unclear whether the intention was that the recipient would send the hem itself, or merely the impression of the hem in the clay of the tablet. While it is true that no evidence exists for the use of hems in sealing jars or other objects, Malul is using an argument from silence; it is not clear if there is no evidence because hems were not used in these contexts or because no such evidence was preserved in the archaeological record. Even if Malul were correct about the use of hems being limited to undertaking obligations in legal contexts, his theory does not explain why the hem was used for these specific texts, and not for others. For example, Malul notes that many of the texts that contain hem impressions are loan documents. What makes these loan documents different from the large number of loan documents from this period that contain cylinder seal impressions instead? Another difficulty with Malul’s interpretation is that in two instances (TCL 1 76 and TCL 1 79), witnesses use hems to seal the documents in question. It is unclear how or why these witnesses would be undertaking a guarantee of personal liability, rather than one of the principals involved in the case. In TCL 1 76, which records the sale of an empty plot, both the seller (Ipiq-Adad) and his brother who serves as one of the witnesses (Manium) seal the document with their hems. Malul suggests that Manium uses his hem because he is also acknowledging the giving up of the property in question. While it is true that the court could forbid even relatives who might be tempted to raise a future claim from doing so, this interpretation is

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332 Malul, 301-309.
334 Malul, 302-303.
335 Ibid., 303-304.
336 TCL 1 19:17.
337 Malul, 306.
338 Ibid., 308.
339 E.g., CT 45 18:17-30. This text forbids not only the plaintiff, Nidnuša, from raising a claim, but also forbids the brothers of one Amat-Šamaš, the woman who gave the
problematic because there are other transactions in which siblings are listed as actual participants rather than as witnesses. In these cases, only the first sibling listed seals with his hem. In VAS 9 83, a man named Iddin-Adad and his sister Humtani take out a loan together, but only Iddin-Adad seals with his hem. (Humtani does not seal the text.) VAS 8 18 records a dispute over property between several siblings and their brother and his wife. The first-listed sibling of the losing party, Išum-nāšir, sealed with his hem, but his sister Aya-resat, who is listed second, seals with her own cylinder seal. (Their other sister, Erištum, who is listed third, does not seal at all.) Malul suggests that Išum-nāšir took on an extra level of obligation, namely that of guaranteeing the promise of no contest. His suggestion seems inconsistent with his assertion that Manium, the brother of the seller in TCL 1 76, took on an extra obligation of relinquishment of the property by sealing with his hem, even though he was only a witness to the transaction. Even Malul acknowledges that TCL 1 79, a loan document in which only one of the witnesses seals with his hem, is problematic for his argument. He suggests that the borrower’s hem impression may have appeared in the broken section of the edge of the envelope. Since there is no apparent familial or other connection between the borrower and the witness who signed with his hem, it is unclear why this witness would be undertaking some sort of obligation in this case.

It is clear, however, that witnesses played a crucial role in the legal process. While sealed documents could serve as evidence in legal proceedings, the testimony of witnesses played a more important role. Unlike contemporary legal documents, which create obligations that need to be fulfilled by the relevant parties, Mesopotamian legal documents recorded legal transactions that had already taken place, and are written from the point of view of the witnesses. Their testimony was crucial in verifying events that had taken place or in authenticating documents. For example, CT 2 47 deals with a claim that a will was forged. In case a tablet was lost, the testimony of the witnesses from the original transaction could be used to make a new tablet. Thus, it would be of


340 Malul, 305-306.
341 Ibid., 308.
342 Ibid.
344 One letter, TLB 4 82, mentions the fact that because the other party has a tablet with the seal of the recipient of the letter on it, the recipient of the letter has no chance of winning if the case were to go to court. See Renger, "Legal Aspects of Sealing in Ancient Mesopotamia," 76, 81 n. 12.
345 Ibid., 75.
346 Westbrook, "Old Babylonian Period," 373 n. 41.
347 E.g., CT 47 63. See Ibid., 374.
paramount importance to establish the legal identity of the witnesses who authenticated the
document; it is not surprising, then, that a witness could seal a document using a hem. Thus, it seems that there is no distinct nuance in the choice of the use of a hem instead of a cylinder seal to seal a legal document; both signify a legal obligation by the party who sealed or an authentication of the transaction by the witness who sealed. Even if Malul were correct and there were some extra obligation on the part of the individual who sealed using a hem, however, both a hem and a cylinder seal function to communicate the legal identity of the individual involved.

3.2.2.3 Why can a hem be used in lieu of a seal?

But why can a hem be substituted for a seal? At first glance it may seem that hems do not meet Gelb’s definition for a seal, as stated in the section on sealing (section 3.2.2.1) above. However, a careful examination of the evidence shows that objections to the hem fitting Gelb’s definition could apply equally well to cylinder seals; both fit Gelb’s criteria for seals equally well.

One objection is that hems, unlike cylinder seals, lack “distinctive markings” and are not able to directly identify the user of the device. Sealing practices, however, show that objections could apply equally to cylinder seals, although both cylinder seals and the hem of the garment are used to seal legal documents. The iconography on Old Babylonian cylinder seals can be divided generally into two types: contest scenes and presentation scenes. The iconography can be very similar. For example, a typical presentation scene contains a deity wearing a horned hat who presents a worshiper to another deity, who is also wearing a horned hat and a flounced robe, and is seated. Without a legend containing the name, patronymic, and family deity of the owner, it might be difficult to distinguish seals with the same type of scene. Sometimes, for various reasons, the seal impression is illegible (e.g. the seal impression appears over a section of the tablet that contains writing, making it impossible to distinguish which seal was used); although the cylinder seal itself might have had “distinct markings,” the impression it leaves is not always distinct. In addition, Renger points out that on occasion in Old Babylonian Nippur, tablets bear the words “seal of PN” next to an empty space—neither a cylinder seal nor a hem is impressed in the clay. This seems to be the equivalent of the modern practice of an illiterate individual signing a legal document with an “x.” Clearly, no markings of any kind, much less “distinctive markings,” are necessary to “seal” a legal document; rather, it is Gelb’s third aspect, the legalizing or validating of the document that is most important defining characteristic of a seal. Hems and seals seem to function equally well in legalizing or validating a document.

Furthermore, even cylinder seals can fail to meet Gelb’s second standard, that of identifying the individual who is using the device. Many Old Babylonian seals do have a legend indicating the name of the owner, his father’s name, and the name of his family god. While there is no known evidence that it is the case throughout Mesopotamian history, during the Old Assyrian period, there is evidence that the hems of garments could

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348 Gelb, 111-112.
349 E.g., 3 NT 223. See Renger, "Legal Aspects of Sealing in Ancient Mesopotamia," 77, 84 n. 41.
be marked with the name of the owner,\textsuperscript{350} much like cylinder seals. Just as not all hems were marked with the owner’s name, some seals lack a legend; the individual that used the seal is only identifiable because his name is written next to the cylinder seal impression,\textsuperscript{351} as is done for hem impressions. In Old Babylonian Sippar, a scribe by the name of Sîn-nāṣir used two different seals during his lifetime, both of which omitted his name, profession, patronymic, and family god. Instead, the earlier one contained a five-line prayer expressing his devotion to Nabium, the god of writing, while the second contained a six-line prayer expressing his devotion to Isimu, Enki’s vizier.\textsuperscript{352}

Even cylinder seals did not necessarily indicate a fixed identity; the identity of the owner could change. Seals could be re-cut or otherwise modified by subsequent owners in order to reflect the identity of the new owner. One lapis lazuli seal\textsuperscript{353} that originated in the Akkadian period initially depicted a worshiper and two ibex with a tree between them. During the Ur III period, the worshiper’s dress was modified, one of the ibex was removed and an inscription was added. In the Old Babylonian period, the new owner replaced the inscription with his own legend; his son later added his own inscription.\textsuperscript{354} One Old Babylonian seal may have been re-cut from an Early Dynastic Seal.\textsuperscript{355} Another Old Babylonian seal appears to have been re-cut from an Ur III seal. It depicts both the weather god standing on a bull, which is typical of the Old Babylonian period, and a date-palm altar, which is more typical of the Ur III period.\textsuperscript{356}

In addition, sometimes the legend on the seal does not match the name in the phrase “seal of PN” written next to the seal impression.\textsuperscript{357} It is possible either that the seal was borrowed for the occasion or that the seal was re-used by a new owner, who did not change either the design or the inscription. On occasion, the person whose name appears in the seal legend does not appear anywhere in the text, and there is no notation to indicate who used the seal.\textsuperscript{358} Sometimes a son can use his father’s seal. In Old

\textsuperscript{350} KTS 10:12-15 and BIN 4 8:12-15. KTS 10:12 reads: “mark the hems of the textiles with your (names) as my representatives.” BIN 4 8:8 reads, “the name(s) of Ilabrat-bani are not marked on the hems of the textiles.” See Klaas R. Veenhof, \textit{Aspects of Old Assyrian Trade and Its Terminology} (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1972), 43-44.
\textsuperscript{351} E.g., TCL 1 76, VAS 8 107
\textsuperscript{352} van Koppen, 158-159. Van Koppen is able to associate Sîn-nāṣir with his seal because Sîn-nāṣir and his relative Ipiq-Annunitum witnessed transactions for each other. See van Koppen, 153. Note that this is the same Sîn-nāṣir, whose prayer to the moon god, gives evidence for the familial affiliation of women in the section 3.3.1.3 below.
\textsuperscript{353} IM 83701
\textsuperscript{354} Collon, \textit{First Impressions: Cylinder Seals in the Ancient Near East}, 120-122. Such instances of seals being reused by new owners are also given by Teissier: 117.
\textsuperscript{355} BM 82062 (CT 48 114). See Teissier: 119, 169.
\textsuperscript{357} For example, in CT 8 16a, one of the witnesses, Sîn-rēmēnī, uses a seal inscribed with the name Ṣilli-abiya. See Renger, "Legal Aspects of Sealing in Ancient Mesopotamia," 84 n. 42. In several Sippar texts (BM 17098A, BM 82250, BM 82137), the name of the individual who was supposed to have sealed does not match the name in the seal legend. See Teissier: 112 n. 23.
\textsuperscript{358} BM 60881/60882, as noted by Teissier: 111 n. 22.
Babylonian Sippar, Sin-nadin-šumi used the seal of his father Ipiq-Aya before eventually acquiring several of his own over the course of his career.\textsuperscript{359} Annum-pīša uses his father’s seal to witness a sale.\textsuperscript{360} Šamaš-tillassu also uses his father’s seal to witness a sale.\textsuperscript{361} In one case, a nadītum named Kanšassu-mātum uses her father’s seal to witness a document of inheritance.\textsuperscript{362} Annum-pī-Aya used his own seal in an adoption document in the year Hammurabi 11, but used his father’s seal to witness a sale in Hammurabi 30.\textsuperscript{363} Other family members could share or loan each other seals as well. Two brothers, Sīn-eribam and Šamaš-bani, share the same seal in an inheritance document.\textsuperscript{364} Other relationships between the owner and user of the seal are possible as well. In a lease, the sister of the landlord, Iaphatum, appears to have loaned her seal to either the lessee or a witness.\textsuperscript{365} In another lease, the father of the lessee, Imlīk-Sīn, loaned his seal to one of the witnesses.\textsuperscript{366} In one sale, the seller and two witnesses all used the same seal.\textsuperscript{367} In another sale, one of the witnesses, Ilšu-abušu, seems to have loaned his seal to his neighbor Šamaš-nāṣir, another witness.\textsuperscript{368} Sometimes two or more witnesses used the same seal in the same document. In one sale, two witnesses, Akšak-iddinam and Pala-Šamaš, used the same seal.\textsuperscript{369} In another sale, Šu-abušu, who was one of the witnesses, loaned his seal to another witness named Sīn-rēmēni.\textsuperscript{370} In yet another sale, five witnesses (Amri-ilšu, Latī-ilu, Lītū-ašdam, Ilī-abu-Sīn, and Kīma-ahum) used the same seal, which lacks a legend identifying the owner.\textsuperscript{371} In an adoption, two witnesses, Šūmum-libši and Ilšu-ibbišu, used the same seal (without legend).\textsuperscript{372} Thus, it seems that a seal can be used to identify a user (Gelb’s second criterion for a seal), whether or not he or she owns it.

An interesting phenomenon appears in the admittedly much earlier Ur III administrative texts. On occasion, we find the phrase “in place of PN (the person who is expected to seal the document) the seal of PN-2 (was rolled).”\textsuperscript{373} One interesting variant of this phrase appears as “PN-2, the overseer, rolled the seal of PN-3 in place (of the seal)

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{359} van Koppen, 157-159. \\
\textsuperscript{360} BM 78280 (CT 45 20). See Teissier: 123. \\
\textsuperscript{361} BM 92584 (Dekiere 1994: 181). See Ibid. \\
\textsuperscript{362} BM 17045A (CT 47 30A). See Ibid.: 140. \\
\textsuperscript{363} BM 82427 (CT 8 48A) and BM 92650. See Ibid.: 117, 131, 133. \\
\textsuperscript{364} BM 17098A (Dekiere 1994: 226). See Ibid.: 159. \\
\textsuperscript{365} BM 82391 (Dekiere 1994: 274). See Ibid.: 127. \\
\textsuperscript{366} BM 17460A (Dekiere 1994: 244). See Ibid. \\
\textsuperscript{367} BM 17071 (CT 47 34A). See Ibid.: 150. \\
\textsuperscript{368} BM 17062A (CT 47 23A). See Ibid.: 170. \\
\textsuperscript{369} BM 17062A (CT 47 23A). See Ibid.: 144. \\
\textsuperscript{371} BM 92638B (Dekiere 1994: 341). See Ibid.: 162. \\
\textsuperscript{373} Steinkeller, "Seal Practice in the Ur III Period," 43.
\end{flushright}
of PN, the foreman.”

Apparently, another official could seal a document in place of the one who was expected to, using either his own seal or even another person’s seal. This raises interesting questions of legal identity—here, the official who signed in place of the expected official, while clearly identified as himself, in some sense also takes on the legal identity of the other official. It is similar to the modern practice of an assistant signing a letter on behalf of a superior and appending his own initials to the signature. The letter is still considered to have come from the superior, even though the assistant physically signed it. Presumably, the official in whose name the document was sealed was still legally responsible for what was sealed on his behalf.

Thus, in the Old Babylonian period, because both a hem and a seal fit the criteria for a seal equally well (or equally badly, as the case may be), the two could be treated as interchangeable; both could be used to communicate legal identity.

Thus, it seems that the hem of the garment is an item of dress that communicates identity. It is not merely a personality symbol; rather, it is interchangeable with a cylinder seal in confirming the legal identity of the individual involved in the matter, whether as a party or as a witness to the transaction. This legal identity carries with it a legal obligation by the party who sealed or a responsibility to authenticate the transaction by the witness who sealed. It is because of this ability to communicate legal identity and therefore legal obligation that hems can be manipulated to change legal identity.

3.3 Hems and Change in Identity

In this section, I argue that the hem, which communicates legal identity, can be manipulated to change both familial identity and marital status (dress used in the construction of identity approach). In the first part of this section, I argue that tying the terhatum in a woman’s hem had important implications for identity, both for the woman herself and her future children. In the second part of this section, I argue that cutting the woman’s hem in divorce was the reversal of the tying of the terhatum in the woman’s hem in marriage, which also had important consequences for the woman’s identity. I start with a brief overview of the marriage process, then discuss the problematic term terhatum. Finally, I examine the textual evidence for the role of the hem in the woman’s change of identity.

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374 Ibid.

375 A. Podany has studied the creation of ties of kinship between kings during the second millennium B.C. in Syria and Mesopotamia. The kings talked about “tying the hem” for creating relationships between allies, “seizing the hem” for entering into relationships of overlord and vassal, and “severing the hem” for breaking off relationships. While Podany does not find evidence that these were literal actions, she suggests that these metaphors were used to describe the creation (or severing) of family-like relationships between rulers because of the use of the hem in marriage and divorce. See Amanda H. Podany, "Preventing Rebellion through the Creation of Symbolic Ties of Kinship in Syria and Mesopotamia during the Second Millennium B.C.,” in Rebellions and Peripheries in the Cuneiform World, ed. Seth Richardson (New Haven: American Oriental Society, 2010), 47-59.
3.3.1 Marriage

3.3.1.1 Marriage in Old Babylonian Mesopotamia

In his extensive study on Old Babylonian marriage, R. Westbrook described marriage as a multi-staged process. The first stage was the contract, which had three essential components: the parents of the bride promise to give her to the groom, the groom promises to take the bride as his wife, and the groom promises to pay the terhatum for the bride.\textsuperscript{376} The second stage was inchoate marriage, that is, incomplete marriage.\textsuperscript{377} Westbrook identified two types of inchoate marriage, standard and kallūtum. In standard inchoate marriage, the groom now has the right to take the bride as a wife. In kallūtum inchoate marriage, the father of the groom pays the terhatum. The bride (and sometimes the groom) is too young to complete the marriage. The bride enters into the house of her parents-in-law.\textsuperscript{378} In both instances, as far as outside parties are concerned, the bride is to be treated as though the marriage had already been completed.\textsuperscript{379} In the third stage, the groom finally claims his bride: in the case of standard inchoate marriage, from the house of his father-in-law; in the case of kallūtum inchoate marriage, from his own parents’ house.\textsuperscript{380}

The payment of the terhatum initiates the second stage, or inchoate marriage. The terhatum is later tied in the bride’s hem and returned to the groom (or his father) at any time after inchoate marriage is initiated. See Figure 3 for a summary of this process.

Figure 3: Stages in Marriage

1. Contract
   (payment of terhatum)
2. Inchoate marriage
   A. Standard
   B. kallūtum
   (tying terhatum in the hem)
3. The groom claims the bride


\textsuperscript{378} Westbrook, \textit{Old Babylonian Marriage Law}, 36-38.

\textsuperscript{379} Ibid., 34-35.

\textsuperscript{380} Ibid., 39-41.
3.3.1.2 Tying the terhatum in the Bride’s Hem

Scholars disagree over the exact nature of the terhatum in the Old Babylonian period. Koschaker sees Babylonian marriage as “Kaufehe” (marriage by purchase), with the terhatum as the price paid to acquire the bride, although he later tempered this view by pointing out that while marriage was based on the notion of a sale, a wife was not purchased as goods. Cuq interprets it as a gift, which Driver and Miles suggest would ensure a favorable response from the bride’s father. Van der Meer proposes that it was a compensation to the bride for the loss of her virginity.

Westbrook convincingly demonstrates the weaknesses of these various interpretations, however. He points out that it cannot be a gift, since the payment of the terhatum moves the couple from the betrothal stage to inchoate marriage, with more protection for the groom’s interest and against interference from other parties. Further, he notes that payment of the terhatum gives the groom the right to claim the bride; the groom may not claim the bride until it is paid. Westbrook raises three objections to the idea that the terhatum is a compensation to the bride for the loss of her virginity. First, he notes that someone other than the groom can pay the terhatum. Second, the terhatum is often paid to the father of the bride. Most importantly, in one text, it appears that the terhatum is paid for a woman who has already given birth to a child. Westbrook objects to the idea of Kaufehe for several reasons. Westbrook begins with several objections that scholars have raised to the idea of marriage as Kaufehe. First, CH §138-139 seem to suggest that it is possible for a marriage to take place without a terhatum; if

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381 For a discussion of the nīg₂-mi₂-us₂-sa₂, the Sumerian lexical equivalent of the terhatum in earlier periods, see Claus Wilcke, "Familiengründung im alten Babylonien," in Geschlechtsreife und Legitimation zur Zeugung, ed. Ernst Wilhelm Müller, et al. (Freiburg: Alber, 1985), 252ff. The terhatum in the sense of “bridewealth” (gift given by the groom or his family to the bride’s family) appears in the Old Assyrian, Old Babylonian, and Middle Assyrian periods, as well as at Mari, Emar, Middle Babylonian Alalakh, and Nuzi. At Ras Shamra and in the late Babylonian period, terhatum appears to be a gift given to the groom’s family. For instances of these uses, see CAD T p. 350-354. In the late Babylonian period, the term terhatum does not appear in marriage agreements; the term biblu is used instead for a gift given by the groom or his family to the bride’s family. For a study on these late marriage agreements, see Martha T. Roth, Babylonian Marriage Agreements 7th—3rd Centuries B.C. (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1989).


385 Driver, 261.

386 J. van der Meer, "Tirhatu," RA 31 (1934): 123.

387 Westbrook, Old Babylonian Marriage Law, 59.

388 Ibid.
marriage were a sale, how could a sale take place without a purchase price? Second, if the terhatum were a purchase price, it is much too low to acquire even a slave; it cannot be a mere legal form, or the amount would be consistent. Third, the existence of a dowry seems to be incompatible with the idea of the wife as an object of sale. Fourth, since the wife was not treated as the husband’s property under Old Babylonian law, she cannot be the object of a sale. Westbrook then raises several objections of his own. First, he notes that Koschaker’s theory is based on the equation of the contract between the groom and the bride’s father in CH §159-161 (which Koschaker considers a sale contract) with marriage itself. Since in Westbrook’s view, these are two separate entities, even if CH §159-161 does describe a contract of sale, it does not follow that the act of marriage itself is a sale. Second, marriage and sale are not identical—if they were, then, in theory, a bride could be re-sold to another man or returned to her father for a refund, which is not the case. Westbrook argues instead that a terhatum was a payment to the parents of the bride to relinquish their control over her, which initiated the betrothal. I suggest that there is another aspect to the terhatum that is perhaps obvious, but often overlooked in these discussions, which would not be incompatible with Westbrook’s interpretation. The issue is identity, specifically, familial affiliation. Two issues are at stake here: the familial identity of the bride and the familial identity of the bride’s children. The payment of the terhatum by tying it into the bride’s hem appears to initiate a change in the woman’s familial affiliation and identity, and to affirm her children’s familial affiliation and identity.

3.3.1.3 Familial Affiliation and Identity of the Woman

In this section, I argue that the first purpose of the terhatum is to initiate the change in the woman’s identity and transfer her membership from her family of origin to that of her new family.

What was the woman’s familial affiliation and identity before the payment of the terhatum? During the Old Babylonian period, based on the inscriptions on cylinder seals, three different aspects of a person’s identity were important: the person’s name, his patronymic, and either his family deity, king, or temple association. Of the seal impressions with inscriptions that have been preserved, very few belong to women. A woman might be identified by her name and patronymic before marriage. In an exceptional case, a woman named Ama-sukkal, daughter of Ninurta-mansum seals a document concerning her own marriage. The majority of these women who used seals,

389 Ibid., 54-56.
390 Ibid., 56-58.
391 Ibid., 59-60.
392 BE 6/2 40. This document is exceptional, however, in that unlike most marriage documents, Ama-sukkal is said here to take Enlil-issu as a husband. Normally, it is the husband who “takes” a wife. The grammar makes it clear, though, that it is the woman Ama-sukkal who is performing the taking here. A document dated 4 years later (BE 6/2 47) concerning this same marriage, however, is not sealed by her.
however, were nadiātum (singular nāditum)\textsuperscript{393} of Šamaš in Sippar.\textsuperscript{394} Since a nāditum of Šamaš was not permitted to marry, she retained her identity as a member of her family, while adding her association with Šamaš (or his temple). For example, we find Damiqtum, the daughter of Šamaš-tabbašu, nāditum of Šamaš;\textsuperscript{395} Amat-[ ], daughter of [ ], servant of [ ];\textsuperscript{396} Bēlī-[ ], the daughter of [ ], servant of [ ];\textsuperscript{397} Nišinnišu, the daughter of Abjatum, nāditum of Šamaš;\textsuperscript{398} Masiqtum, daughter of Iarimīšum, servant of Šamaš and [Aya];\textsuperscript{399} Erišī-[ Šamaš], daughter of Sin-[ṭayar], servant of [ ];\textsuperscript{400} [ ]hatum, daughter of ŠAG5.[ ], servant of Šamaš and Aya.\textsuperscript{401} Although the inscription on the seal impression does not specifically identify all of them as nadiātum or servants of Šamaš, since they appear as witnesses on documents relating to the nadiātum of Šamaš, it is likely that Alta[ ], daughter of Rib[ ]\textsuperscript{402} and Bēlessunu, [daughter] of Sin-milk[i]\textsuperscript{403} would fall into this category as well.

Marriage added another aspect to a woman’s identity: that of wife. Scholars tend to agree that Mesopotamia was a patriarchal and patrilocal society—in general, the wife leaves her family and is incorporated into the husband’s family. This identity as wife, however, indicates a new familial identity. An Old Babylonian prayer to the moon god Sin\textsuperscript{404} illustrates this. This prayer, commissioned by Sin-nāšir, lists five generations of Sin-nāšir’s family. Van der Toorn points out that this list is interesting because of what it demonstrates about the place of women in the family: the only women mentioned in this list of five generations of family are daughters who are nadiātum of Šamaš and wives (mothers).\textsuperscript{405} Since the nadiātum of Šamaš were not permitted to marry, these women retained the affiliation and identity of their family of origin, as daughters of the family. Women who married into the family, becoming wives and mothers, are included as family members; thus, their affiliation and identity is associated with their husbands’

\textsuperscript{393} A nāditum was a kind of temple functionary; her exact duties and functions are not known. R. Harris suggests that a nāditum was the daughter-in-law of Šamaš and Aya. See Rivkah Harris, "The Nāditu Woman," in Studies presented to A. Leo Oppenheim, June 7, 1964 (Chicago: The Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago, 1964), 110-113. P. Steinkeller argues instead that a nāditum was a junior wife to Šamaš. See Steinkeller, "More on the Ur III Royal Wives," 84-85 n. 47.

\textsuperscript{394} As noted by Renger, "Legal Aspects of Sealing in Ancient Mesopotamia," 84 n. 45.

\textsuperscript{395} CT 47 7 Seal 1
\textsuperscript{396} CT 47 11a Seal 4
\textsuperscript{397} CT 47 11a Seals 10
\textsuperscript{398} CT 47 40 Seal 4
\textsuperscript{399} CT 47 40 Seals 6
\textsuperscript{400} CT 47 56 Seal 6
\textsuperscript{401} CT 47 75 Seal 1
\textsuperscript{402} CT 47 42a Seal 6
\textsuperscript{403} CT 47 42a Seal 7
\textsuperscript{404} BE 6/2 111. Note that this is the same Sin-nāšir, whose seal is described in the section on “Why can a hem be used in lieu of a seal?” above.

\textsuperscript{405} van der Toorn, Family Religion in Babylonia, Syria, and Israel, 54.
family, rather than their family of origin. While a man (or his father) usually pays a terhatum in order to take a bride, in several cases, mostly from Old Babylonian Sippar, a woman pays a terhatum to acquire another woman, whose identity subsequently changes. The new identity of this other woman, however, is not necessarily “wife.” One possible new identity is that of slave to the woman paying the terhatum and wife to the husband of the woman paying the terhatum. In CT 48 48, Ahâssunu pays a terhatum to take Sabitum as a slave for herself and a wife for her husband. Sabitum’s identity as a slave in relationship to Ahâssunu is further delineated by the provisions that Sabitum must be angry or at peace when Ahâssunu is, and that Ahâssunu can sell Sabitum. In another text, although Ahi-liburum is never specifically called a slave after Ahâtum pays her terhatum

406 D. Charpin, in his review of K. Radner’s (2005) Der Macht des Namens, agrees with Radner’s objection to van der Toorn’s assessment that a woman’s familial identity changed after marriage. Charpin agrees with Radner’s position based on evidence from seal legends. He cites, for example, “Šibtu, daughter of Yārīm-Līm, wife of Zimrī-Līm,” “Yamama, daughter of Yahdun-Līm, wife of Asqûdûm,” “Iltani, daughter of Samu-Addu, wife of Aqba-Hammû,” “Šallurtum, daughter of the king Sûmû-la-El, wife of the king Sîn-kašid, his beloved,” and “Šāt-Sîn, daughter of Sûmû-El, daughter-in-law of Manna-balti-El, wife of Iblin-šadû.” See Charpin: 164. It must be noted, however, that all of these woman were royal daughters. Šibtu was the daughter of Yārīm-Līm, king of Yamhad, and the wife of king Zimrī-Līm of Mari. Yamama was the daughter of Yahdun-Līm, the king of Mari; her husband Asqûdûm was a diviner. Iltani was the daughter of Samu-Addu, king of Karana, and the wife of Aqba-Hammû, who usurped the throne of Karana from her brother. Šallurtum was the daughter Sûmû-la-El, king of Babylone, and the wife of king Sîn-kašid of Uruk. Šāt-Sîn was the daughter of Sûmû-El, king of Larsa, the daughter-in-law of Manna-balti-El, king of Kissura, and the wife of Iblin-šadû, Manna-balti-El’s son. However, since royal daughters were often used to make alliances or other beneficial relationships, keeping their identity as royal daughters would be essential; it is uncertain whether what was true for the naming, and thus the identity of royal women, would apply equally to the non-royal women in these legal texts.

407 AbB 12, 129:3

408 The payment of the terhatum at Nuzi seems to play a similar function. J. Fincke has studied three kinds of adoption at Nuzi: ana mārtūti (into daughtership), ana call(at)ūti (into daughter-in-lawship), and ana mārtūti u call(at)ūti (into daughtership and daughter-in-lawship). The payment that the adopter makes is sometimes referred to as kīma terhati (as a terhatum) or kīma terhatišu (as her terhatum). See Jeanette C. Fincke, "Adoption of Women at Nuzi," in The Nuzi Workshop at the 55th Rencontre Assyriologique Internationale (July 2009, Paris), ed. Philippe Abraami and Brigitte Lion (Bethesda: CDL Press, 2012), 119-140.
and gives her to her (Ahātum’s) husband, the similarity in the language of the document to CT 48 suggests that this is the case. Although the text is broken, it appears that Ahi-liburam must be angry when Ahātum is. In addition, Ahi-liburam is required to wash Ahātum’s feet, carry her chair to the temple, and not oppose her. At the very least, Ahi-liburam is in a subordinate position to Ahātum. Another possible new identity is that of daughter and daughter-in-law. In CT 47, Bēltani, a nadītum of Šamaš, takes Mārat-erṣetim as a daughter and daughter-in-law by paying a terhatum. While Bēltani promises to give Mārat-erṣetim to a husband in the future, her current new identity is that of daughter and daughter-in-law, not wife. Similarly, Pirurutum becomes a daughter and daughter-in-law to Bēlessunu after Bēlessunu pays her terhatum. A third possible new identity is that of sister to the woman paying the terhatum and wife to the husband of the woman paying the terhatum. In a text from Isin, BIN 7 173, Tayatum pays Ali-abi’s terhatum to acquire her as a sister. While Tayatum subsequently gives Ali-abi to her own husband as a second wife, the document makes it clear that if he tries to divorce Tayatum, she has the right to take Ali-abi, her sister, with her. Thus, Ali-abi’s primary new identity after the payment of the terhatum is that of sister, not wife.

From these cases, two things are clear. First, after the terhatum is paid, the woman has other possible new identities (slave, daughter and daughter-in-law, or sister), and not just “wife.” Second, in the case of a woman who is adopted as daughter and daughter-in-law in anticipation of a future marriage, her familial identity has already changed upon the payment of the terhatum. Thus, since the terhatum is used more broadly than just in contracting marriages, this suggests that it is the payment of the terhatum, and not marriage in and of itself, that was instrumental in changing a woman’s identity.

Although the payment of the terhatum initiated a change in the woman’s identity, at the same time, it affirmed another aspect of her identity. The amount of the terhatum, not surprisingly, seems to reflect her social status. While the terhatum was generally a monetary amount, it could also include livestock, slaves, or other objects. During the Old Babylonian period, the value of the terhatum ranged from ½ shekel to 4 mina (240 shekels) plus 100 ewes and female servants. The value of the terhatum is summarized in Table 9.

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409 CT 48 57
410 Waterman Business Documents 72 (Bu 91-5-9, 697)
411 Obviously, though, only monetary amounts, not objects, were tied into a woman’s hem.
Table 9: Value of the *terhatum*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Amount of <em>terhatum</em></th>
<th>Number of occurrences</th>
<th>Provenance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&lt; 5 shekels of silver</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Sippar, northern Babylonia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 or 10 shekels of silver</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>Sippar, Isin/Larsa, Kutalla, unknown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt; 10 shekels of silver</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Sippar, Kissura</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(amount broken)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Sippar, unknown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(amount not mentioned)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Sippar</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The most common value of the *terhatum* in the Old Babylonian period is either 5 or 10 shekels of silver. While there is not enough identifying information about the women whose *terhatum* was less than 5 shekels of silver to say something about their social status, in general, the women whose *terhatum* is larger than 10 shekels tend to belong to the upper class. In CT 47 83, Bēletum, identified as a *nadītum* of Marduk of Babylon, whose *terhatum* is (an unknown number or fraction of) a mina of silver, a silver cup, a gold ring, 2 turbans, and some garments, also receives a substantial dowry. In general, *nadītum* came from the upper class. In VAS 8 4, the *terhatum* of Ištar-ummii is 2/3 mina (40 shekels) of silver and one male slave. Her mother Lamassatum is identified as a *nadītum* of Šamaš. In OLA 21 73, the woman’s name is not preserved, but she receives a *terhatum* of 2/3 mina (40 shekels) of silver, along with a dowry. While little is stated about the woman herself, her father, Warad-E-idimmana, appears as a witness in three other legal texts from Sippar (BAP 107, CT 8 10b, CT 8 14a), which suggests his relatively high social status. In BE 6/1 84, Liwir-Esagil, whose *terhatum* is ½ mina (30 shekels) of silver, is a *nadītum* of Marduk. She also receives a substantial dowry. In BE 6/1 101, Damiqtum has a *terhatum* of 1 mina (20 shekels) of silver, as well as a dowry. Damiqtum is identified as a *šugītum*. While the *šugītum* appears in a lexical list of women, the *šugītum* appears most often a second wife in relation to a *nadītum*; little

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412 CT 4 18b, CT 8 7b, VAS 9 192/193, Waterman Bus. Doc. 72, YOS 13 440
413 BIN 7 173, CT 33 34, CT 47 40, CT 48 50, CT 48 51, CT 48 52, CT 48 53 (tablet: 5 shekels, case: 6 shekels), CT 48 55, CT 48 57, Jean Tell Sifr 35/35a, PBS 8/2 252, TIM 4 46, VAS 8 92, YOS 12 457
414 BE 6/1 84, BE 6/1 101, CT 8 2, CT 47 83, OLA 21 73, VAS 8 4, Waterman Bus. Doc. 39, Kienast Kissura 109
415 BAP 90
416 AbB 10 143, ABIM 35, CT 48 48, CT 48 56
417 G. Suurmeijer has argued that in Sippar, the value of the *terhatum* was related to the situation of the bride, whether she was the first wife of a free man, entering into a kallūtum, a second wife, or given as a wife to a slave. See Guido Suurmeijer, "'He Took Him as His Son': Adoption in Old Babylonian Sippar," R4 104 (2010): 25-26. There is a range of values for each of these situations, however, which means that the situation of the bride is not the only factor used to determine the value of the *terhatum*.
418 See Benno Landsberger, "Zu den Frauenklassen des Kodex Hammurabi," ZA 30 (1915): 69. and AfO 10 145f. For an electronic edition of this text, see http://oracc.museum.upenn.edu/dcclt/P282499.
else is know about them. According to CH §145, her status is lower than that of a nadītum. Nevertheless, her dowry attests to her relatively high status. In CT 8 2a, Lamasatim, a nadītum of Marduk, has a terhatum of 1/3 mina (20 shekels) of silver. The substantial amount of goods she receives from her father at her installation confirms her high status. In fact, she receives her sister Suratum, identified as a šugītum, from her father as well. It is not clear whether Suratum is Lamasatim’s natural or adopted sister; in either case, a šugītum, while of lower status in the marriage than a nadītum, can still come from a fairly high status family. The social status of Ištar-ummi the third woman whose terhatum is 1/3 mina of silver is not mentioned in the document. Nevertheless, it is clear that women with a higher-valued terhatum came from the upper classes. Thus, the terhatum served to both confirm a woman’s social status and to change her familial identity.

3.3.1.4 Familial Identity of the Bride’s Children

The second issue related to the terhatum is the familial affiliation and identity of the woman’s children. One important aspect of familial affiliation is filiation—to whom do the children of the woman belong? That filiation is not necessarily permanently fixed is clear from documents dealing with adopted children in the case of divorce. Iltani adopted a daughter, whom she brought into her marriage with Nabi-Ninkarrak. The contract makes the following provisions: if Nabi-Ninkarrak divorces Iltani, she is entitled to take her daughter with her; on the other hand, if Iltani initiates the divorce, Nabi-Ninkarrak gets to keep the daughter. It is clear that a wife is expected to provide children for her husband. Nadiātum of Marduk, who are not permitted to bear children of their own, are still required to give children to their husband, whether through the provision of a slave or another wife; this is reflected in CH §137 and §144-147.

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420 VAS 18 114
421 CH §137: šumma awilum ana šugītim ša mārī uldusum ulu nadītim ša mārī ušaršūšu ežēm panišu ištakan ana sinnštim šuāti šeriktaša utarrušim u muttat eqṭum kirim u bišim inaddinušimma mārīša urabba ištu mārīša urtišu ina mimma ša ana mārīša innadnu zittam kīma ašīm ištēn inaddinušimma mutu libbiša ihhassī: If a man decides to divorce a šugītum who bore him children or a nadītum who provided children for him, they shall return to that woman her dowry and they shall give her one half of the field, orchard, and property (of her husband), and she shall raise her children. After she has raised her children, they shall give her a share equivalent to that of one heir from whatever properties are given to her sons, and a husband of her choice may marry her. For an edition of the Code of Hammurabi, see Martha T. Roth, Law Collections from Mesopotamia and Asia Minor, ed. Simon B. Parker, 2nd ed., Writings from the Ancient World, Vol. 6 (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1997), 76-140.
422 CH §144: šumma awilum nadītim ihūzma nadītim šē amtam ana mutiša iddīmna mārī uštabši awilum šū ana šugītim ahāzim panišu ištakan awilam šuāti ul imaggārušu šugi̇tam
The children of such a union their identity as part of the husband’s family, rather than the wife’s family of origin? In certain societies, such as the Nuer and Zulu in Africa, part of the bridewealth payment gives the man exclusive rights to the woman’s reproductive potential. But does the payment of the terhatum as a means of acquiring rights to the woman’s reproductive potential fit the situation in Old Babylonian Mesopotamia? The data suggests that it is not merely the woman’s reproductive potential that is at stake here, but her actual provision of offspring, and ultimately the familial identity of her offspring.

The Code of Hammurabi illustrates the connection between the terhatum and the woman’s obligation to provide offspring. CH §163-164 reads:

\[ \text{§145: 'summa avilum naditum ihumum marri la usharissumu ana sugitum ahazim panissu ištakan avilum si sugitum ihit um ana bitisu uşerrebšu sugitum si itti naditum ul uštamahhar: If a man marries a naditum, and she does not provide children for him, and that man decides to marry a sugitum, that many may marry the sugitum and bring her into his house. That sugitum will not make herself equal to the naditum.'} \]

\[ \text{§146: 'summa avilum naditum ihumum amtam ana mutisha iddina marri ittalad warkanum amtum si itti beštis uštatahmur aššum marrī uldu bēlessa ana kaspiš iš diššī abbutam ištakkansimma itti amātim imannūši: If a man marries a naditum, and she gives a female slave to her husband, and she (the female slave) bears children, and after that female slave makes herself equal to her mistress—because she bore children, her mistress will not sell her; she will place on her the hairstyle of a slave, and she will count her with the female slaves.'} \]

\[ \text{§147: 'summa marrī la ālidd bēlessa ana kaspiš inaddišši: If she does not bear children, her mistress will sell her.'} \]

For an edition of the Code of Hammurabi, see Ibid.


424 For an edition of the Code of Hammurabi, see Roth, *Law Collections from Mesopotamia and Asia Minor*, 76-140.
These laws address the situation of a wife who dies without bearing children for her husband. In this case, the widowed husband is owed the value of the terhatum that he paid initially. If he has already received it back, then he has no claims on his wife’s dowry, which is then returned to her father’s house. If he has not yet received back the terhatum, he can deduct the value of the terhatum from his wife’s dowry before returning the balance of the dowry to her father’s house.

What issue do these laws address? First, the husband gets to keep the terhatum if the woman has failed to provide children for her husband before her death. If the terhatum was either the price paid to acquire a bride, a gift given to ensure a favorable response from the bride’s father, or a compensation to the bride for the loss of her virginity, then it would make no sense for the man to get the terhatum back in the case of his wife’s death, since the terhatum would have already served its purpose. Even if the terhatum was only a payment made to the parents of the bride to relinquish their control over her and initiate the betrothal (Westbrook), there would be no justification for the return of the terhatum. Thus, there must be something more to the terhatum than simply a step in the marriage process; the terhatum functions as a kind of money-back-guarantee that the woman will provide children. Since she has failed to do so before her death, her husband is entitled to get the value of the terhatum back.

While certain nadiätum, such as the nadiätum of Marduk were permitted to marry, a nadītum of Šamaš was not permitted to either marry or bear children. In CT 4 18b, a terhatum is paid for a woman as she enters the temple of Šamaš. Harris argues that a nadītum entered as a daughter-in-law to Šamaš; hence, the payment of the terhatum would be necessary. Since she was never given to a son of Šamaš in marriage, she would never bear children. Harris suggests that one reason for a family to send their daughter to be a nadītum of Šamaš was to make sure that the family’s resources stayed in the family. On her death, the dowry that she took with her to the temple would return to the family, in the same way that it would be for a woman who had failed to bear children, as reflected in CH §163-164.

The connection between the payment of the terhatum and the providing of children is also found in individual legal documents related to marriage. As expected, when the husband pays the terhatum, the children belong to him and to his wife, not to her family of origin. In VAS 8 4, after Warad-Sîn pays the terhatum to acquire Ištar-ummi as a wife, the document specifies that the parents of Ištar-ummi will not be able to make claims against either Ištar-ummi or her children, which suggests that the children

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425 Koschaker, Rechtsvergleichende Studien zur Gesetzgebung Hammurapis, 111-235.
426 Cuq, 24-42.
427 Driver, 261.
428 Meer: 123.
429 Harris, "The Nadītu Woman," 113.
430 However, she still might adopt someone who would support her in her old age. See Harris, Ancient Sippar, 309. We see this in CT 47 40 and Waterman Bus. Doc. 72. A nadītum of Šamaš pays a terhatum to acquire another woman as a daughter-in-law and daughter, who would be married off in the future. Presumably, the nadītum would receive a terhatum for the girl when she was married off.
belong to Ištar-ummi, not her parents. CT 8 2a (which will be discussed in more detail in section 3.3.1.5 below) specifies that after the terhatum has been bound in Lamasatim’s hem and returned to her husband, her children are her heirs. The same is true of Damiqṭum in BE 6/1 101. A similar situation applies to Liwir-ESagil in BE 6/1 84, except that the terhatum is returned to her father-in-law, who initially paid the terhatum. It is not surprising that this is the case, since Liwir-ESagil’s children would be his grandchildren, and part of the same new family that Liwir-ESagil now belongs to.

We know that nadiātum of Marduk who are not permitted to bear children are still required to provide children for their husband, as reflected in CH §137 and §144-147. In three documents (CT 48 48, CT 48 57, BIN 7 173), a woman pays the terhatum of another woman to acquire her as either a sister or a slave, and gives this sister or slave to her own husband as a wife. While it is not specified that these women who pay the terhatum are nadiātum, it is quite likely that this is the case, because of the parallel to the situation in CH §137 and §144-147. Furthermore, there is a set of three marriage documents (TCL 1 61, CT 2 44, and BAP 89) that involve the same couple, Warad-Šamaš and Taram-Sagila. In TCL 1 61, Warad-Šamaš and Taram-Sagila are married and the penalty if Warad-Šamaš divorces Taram-Sagila is specified. The other two documents introduce Iltani, the “sister” of Taram-Sagila as a second wife for Warad-Šamaš. Iltani is required to carry Taram-Sagila’s chair to the temple of Marduk, which suggests that Taram-Sagila is a nadiātum of Marduk. In CT 48 57, the adopted woman, Ahi-liburam, is required to carry her adopter’s chair to the temple of Adad. Thus, a nadiātum of Marduk, who cannot bear children of her own yet is required to provide children for her husband, pays a terhatum in order to acquire another wife for her husband, presumably for the purpose of bearing the children that she herself cannot.

Another piece of evidence demonstrating the connection between the payment of the terhatum and the woman’s offspring comes from the unusual marriage document CT 48 53. Ikūn-pî-Sîn pays the terhatum of Ša-Nanaya, who already has a child, and gives her in marriage to his slave Šamaš-mitam-uballīṭ. The document specifies that both the current and the future offspring of this couple belong not to them, but to Ikūn-pî-Sîn. Several features of this case are relevant here. First, Ikūn-pî-Sîn is acquiring a wife, not for himself or for his son, but for his slave. Second, Ikūn-pî-Sîn is the one who paid the terhatum. Third, as a result, the current and future children of this couple belong not to them, but to Ikūn-pî-Sîn. Thus, the payment of the terhatum of Ša-Nanaya gives Ikūn-pî-Sîn the right to the children of this marriage. This has consequences for the identity of the children in question. Normally, one would expect that the children of a marriage would belong to the couple. In this case, however, while they may be the

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431 As noted by Rivkah Harris, "The Case of Three Babylonian Marriage Contracts," *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* 33 (1974). This is likely the known nadiātum of Marduk by that name. See Harris, *Ancient Sippar*, 319.

432 Harris suggests emending the name of the god, dIM, to dAMAR.UTU!. See Harris, *Ancient Sippar*, 320 n. 62.

433 Inheritance law, which is based on having a specific familial identity, confirms this. CH §167 deals with the case of a man who remarries after the death of his first wife. All of his children are eligible to divide their father’s estate; the children of each marriage are entitled to the dowry of their respective mothers. CH §170-171 deals with the case of a
biological children of Ša-Nanaya and Šamaš-mitam-uballit, from a legal standpoint, their identity is that of slave to Ikūn-pi-Sîn.

Another legal case makes the connection between the terhatum and offspring, albeit from the negative standpoint—the lack of the payment of the terhatum is one of the factors that prevent a man from claiming his biological offspring. In BM 96998, Lamassani, a nadītum of Šamaš, has taken her sister’s (Šīmat-Ištar’s) sons. Various members of troops of Sippar are claiming that these sons should belong to Šumum-libši, who belonged to their troops. Lamassani argues that Šumum-libši did not establish a marriage contract for Šīmat-Ištar, and that they did not receive her terhatum. The case is decided in favor of Lamassani.

3.3.1.5 Tying the terhatum in the Woman’s Hem: The Initiation of the Change in Identity

At first glance, it may seem that I am arguing for two different purposes for the terhatum: 1) the change in familial identity of the woman and 2) the confirmation of the familial identity of her children. I propose that the manipulation of the hem by tying the terhatum into it, one of the early stages in marriage during the Old Babylonian period, is what initiates the specific changes in identity for the bride⁴³⁴ and her offspring, namely, man who has children by both his first-ranking wife and a slave woman. If the man acknowledges the slave woman’s children as his children, then they are eligible to inherit his estate along with the children of his wife; if not, then they receive nothing from his estate (except their freedom).

⁴³⁴ K. Van der Toorn has argued that veiling the bride incorporates her into the family (or brings about what I would call a change in identity). He cites a text from Mari (ARM 26 10 lines 13-15), where envos from Mari veiled Šibtu, the daughter of the King of Aleppo, upon her marriage to Zimrī-Lîm. He notes that the significance is made clear in the Middle Assyrian Laws (§41), where a man can turn his concubine into his wife by veiling her. He points out that this custom may go back as far as the third millennium, where a di-ti-ša text (Falkenstein, NSGU 23 lines 9-10) about a remarriage refers to the man “covering” (Sumerian: dul) the woman again. He argues that veiling the bride represents not only the woman’s acceptance as a wife, but the husband’s responsibility to clothe her. See van der Toorn, Family Religion in Babylonia, Syria, and Israel, 43-45. While at first glance veiling the bride would seem to be an excellent candidate for the use of dress in bringing about a change in identity in a rite of passage, there are a few issues with van der Toorn’s suggestion. First, van der Toorn makes a distinction between the veil that a bride wears at the beginning of the ceremony and the one that the groom puts on her. (See van der Toorn, Family Religion in Babylonia, Syria, and Israel, 44.) Van der Toorn’s main example for the veiling of the bride by her new husband (or rather, in this case, his representative) during the Old Babylonian period comes from Mari, and deals with the wedding of King Zimrī-Lîm to the daughter of the King of Aleppo. Van der Toorn is assuming, then, that what happened in Mari and in a royal context would also be applicable to the rest of Mesopotamia in both royal and non-royal contexts. However, there does not seem to be other evidence to support this custom in the rest of Mesopotamia during the Old Babylonian period. Second, van der Toorn’s evidence for
that she becomes both a wife and a member of her husband’s family, and that her offspring will also be members of her husband’s family.

Tying the terhatum in the woman’s hem appears in five marriage documents: BE 6/1 84, CT 8 2a, CT 48 50, BE 6/1 101, and OLA 21 73.\footnote{There are also several texts from Nuzi that mention this same phenomenon: AASOR 16, 55; Gadd no. 42; HSS 5, 80; HSS 19, 7; HSS 19, 44; JEN 78, as noted by Malul, 180. The Nuzi material will not be considered in this study, however, since something else seems to be going on in the Nuzi texts with tying the terhatum in the woman’s hem. In one case, it is the adopter who ties money into the woman’s hem, not the father (Yale 22), as noted by Fincke, 125. In two texts, HSS 19 75 and HSS 19 86, the money tied into the hem is not released to the adopter, as noted by Fincke, 130. This is different than the cases that will be discussed in this section.}

Three of the documents (BE 5/1 84, CT 8 2a, BE 6/1 101) specify that after the terhatum is bound in her hem, and the terhatum is subsequently returned to the person who paid it in the first place (either the husband or his father), her children are her heirs forever.\footnote{For example, BE 6/1 101:20-24 reads: \textit{ištu} 1/3 mana kaspam terhatissa ina qanniša raksūma ana Sīn-išmeani mutiša turru ana matimā mārūša aplūša “after 1/3 mina of silver, her terhatum, is tied in her hem and returned to Sīn-išmeani, her husband, her children are her heirs forever.” OLA 21 73 starts out with a similar phrase: “after 2/3 mina of silver, her terhatum, is tied into her hem and returned to Ili-eribam her father-in-law…” but omits the conclusion “her children are her heirs forever.” It is possible that the scribe accidentally omitted this conclusion, since this text otherwise parallels the other texts, including the use of “after” (\textit{ištu}), which implies that something else happens. The rest of the document deals with the expected swearing of the oath and the list of witnesses.} This suggests a connection between the two events. The implication is that the woman’s familial identity has been changed. Since the woman’s future children eventually will inherit her terhatum and we know that family members inherit, it is clear that the woman’s familial identity and that

the significance of the veiling comes from the Middle Assyrian Laws, which are both later and in a specific geographical area. Even if one ignored the difference in time and place, the context is also different—a man making his concubine into his legal wife, which is not a normal marriage situation. Third, van der Toorn’s use of Falkenstein’s evidence from the neo-Sumerian legal document has similar issues, both with the difference in time period and context. L. Culbertson has argued that the \textit{di-ti-la} texts document disputes by a certain set of elite families; disputing was for the purpose of acquiring status and negotiating political standing. See Laura E. Culbertson, “Dispute Resolution in the Provincial Courts of the Third Dynasty of Ur” (Ph.D. diss., University of Michigan, 2009). In addition, since the context is remarriage, it is uncertain whether the same would apply to a first marriage. Furthermore, Falkenstein himself points out that the Sumerian verb \textit{dul}, which literally means “to cover,” can also be used to mean “to clothe” and not only “to veil.” (See van der Toorn, \textit{Family Religion in Babylonia, Syria, and Israel}, 44.) It is unclear which might apply here, since as van der Toorn himself argued, clothing a wife was one of the responsibilities of a husband. (See van der Toorn, \textit{Family Religion in Babylonia, Syria, and Israel}, 45.)
of her children has been changed because of tying the terhatum in the woman’s hem; the children belong to the woman’s new family, not her family of origin.

This is consistent with CH §163-164. These laws anticipate that the terhatum could be returned to the husband (or his father) even before the birth of any children to the couple. The marriage document CT 48 50 lines 15-20 reflects these laws:

10 šiqil kaspam terhassa Ibattum imhur iššiqma ina sissikti Sabitum mārī[tšu] irkus ana Arad-kubi tūr

Ibbatum received 10 shekels of silver, her terhatum, kissed her, and bound it in the hem of his daughter Sabitum. It is returned to Arad-kubi.

Thus, the terhatum is returned to the woman’s husband. Westbrook argues that this transforms the terhatum into part of the woman’s marital property (nudunnûm),437 which consists of gifts from both the bride’s and the groom’s families. While the husband has usufruct of the marital property during his lifetime, it belongs to the wife upon his death. When the wife dies, her children inherit the marital property, including the terhatum, separately from their father’s estate.438 Rabinowitz argues that inheritance would be of concern in case the first wife dies and the husband remarries and has more children.439

The inheritance of the woman’s marital property by her children, which demonstrates that they belong to her husband’s family, not her family of origin, is also consistent with CH §162, which reads:

šumma awīlim aššatam ihuz mārī ālišsumma Sinništum ši ana šintim ittalak ana šeriktiša abuša ul iraggum šeriktaša ša mārīšama

If a man took a wife and she bore him children, and that woman has gone to her fate, her father will not raise a claim against her dowry; her dowry belongs to her children.

This is the parallel situation to CH §163-164—the death of the wife—except she has already provided children for her husband. In this case, since children are involved, there is no question about the return of the terhatum by the woman’s father; the issue is the inheritance of the dowry. Westbrook argues that the dowry (šeriktum) is also part of the

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437 The money for the terhatum is the groom’s family, the terhatum is usually thought of as “bridewealth,” as opposed to “dowry,” which comes from the bride’s family. Since the ultimate recipient of the terhatum is the bride, however, it is better to think of the terhatum as an “indirect dowry” to differentiate it from “bridewealth.” That the terhatum was ultimately intended for the bride does not mean that her parents could not have kept a portion of it, although there is no proof of this in the texts. For the term “indirect dowry,” see Jack Goody and S. J. Tambiah, Bridewealth and Dowry (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1973), 2.

438 Westbrook, Old Babylonian Marriage Law, 99-100.

marital property.\textsuperscript{440} Thus, the terhatum, along with the dowry, belongs to the woman’s children, not her father.

Some may object to this interpretation because it assumes that a terhatum was always paid, but the payment of the terhatum does not appear to be a necessary stage in Old Babylonian marriage, based on CH §138-140,\textsuperscript{441} which sets a divorce settlement for a woman who has not yet borne children “if there is no terhatum” (šumma terhatum la ibašši).

This objection, however, fails to take into account the purpose of this law—to provide a fair divorce settlement for a childless woman who is divorced without cause. Note that the laws require the man to give the woman an amount equal to the value of her terhatum, or “if there is no terhatum,” he must give 60 shekels of silver (if he is an awīlum (upper class)) or 20 shekels of silver (if he is a muškēnum (middle class)). As I have shown in section 3.3.1.3 above, the average recorded value of a terhatum was 5 or 10 shekels of silver. The only women who had a terhatum larger than 10 shekels presumably belonged to the awīlum-class, since they were mostly nadiātum. In fact, very few women had a terhatum as large as 60 shekels of silver, even among the awīlum-class. Thus, the amount of the divorce settlement “if there is no terhatum” seems extraordinarily high, and not at all in line with the recorded values of the terhatum. I suggest that the reason for this is to prevent the husband from cheating the woman out of her rightful divorce settlement. As noted earlier in this section, Westbrook argued that the man had usufruct of the woman’s terhatum.\textsuperscript{442} If the man were to claim that the terhatum had been invested and lost, or invested and not currently available, then his wife would be prevented from receiving what is rightfully hers. The verb ibašši, often translated in the phrase šumma terhatum la ibašši as “if there is no terhatum” could be more precisely translated “if the terhatum is not available.” Compare the parallel use of this verb in CH §32:

\[ \text{šumma ina bītišu ša paṭārišu la ibašši} \]

if there is not (enough) available to redeem him from his own estate…

\textsuperscript{440} Westbrook, \textit{Old Babylonian Marriage Law}, 96.

\textsuperscript{441} CH §138: šumma awīlum hīrtašu ša mārī la uldušum izzib kaspam mala terhatiša inaddiššim u šerik tam ša īstu bīt abiša ublam ušallāmšimma izzibši: If a man divorces his wife (of equal status) who did not bear children for him, he will give her silver, as much as (the value of) her terhatum, and return to her the dowry that she brought from her father’s house, and he will divorce her.

§139: šumma terhatum la ibašši 1 mana kaspam ana uzubbēm inaddiššim: If the bridewealth is not available, he will give her 1 mina (60 shekels) of silver as a divorce settlement.

§140: šumma muškēnum 1/3 mana kaspam inaddiššim: If he is a muškēnum (middle class), he will give her 20 shekels of silver.

For an edition of the Code of Hammurabi, see Roth, \textit{Law Collections from Mesopotamia and Asia Minor}, 76-140.

\textsuperscript{442} Westbrook, \textit{Old Babylonian Marriage Law}, 99-100.
If CH §138-140 had wanted to specify that the woman did not have a *terhatum*, the verb *išû* could have been used. Compare CH §51:

\[ \textit{šumma kaspam ana turrim la išu} \]

if he does not have silver to repay…

Thus, this set of laws is interested in making sure that a childless wife who is divorced without cause receives the divorce settlement. The extraordinarily high values are to discourage a husband from claiming that there is nothing left from the wife’s *terhatum*, thus cheating her of what should rightfully be hers.

Another objection to the *terhatum* as a necessary part of Old Babylonian marriage could be that not all marriage documents mention the payment of a *terhatum*. The absence of the mention of a *terhatum* in a marriage document, however, is not proof that a woman did not have a *terhatum*. In the document BE 6/2 40, dated from Samu-iluna 13, Ama-sukkal, daughter of Ninurta-mansum marries Enlil-issu. The document specifies that she has brought in 19 shekels of silver for her husband. The rest of the document deals with the disposition of the 19 shekels of silver in the case of a divorce. There is no mention of a *terhatum*. However, a document dated four years later, BE 6/2, deals with the same couple. Apparently, Ama-sukkal has given Enlil-issu an additional 5 shekels of silver, in addition to the 19 she previously brought into the marriage. The document goes on to specify that he will not raise a claim against her *terhatum*. Presumably, then, a *terhatum* was paid, even though it was not mentioned in the first document, and the amount of the *terhatum* was either not recorded, or was recorded in another document that has not been preserved.

Furthermore, there are two texts that suggest that the payment of the *terhatum* was a necessary stage in marriage. A letter from Mari states, “The woman is not a slave; she has been taken with a *terhatum*.” In one legal document, one party argues that their sister was not a wife to Šumum-libši because “He did not establish a marriage contract for her, and he did not provide her…, nor did we receive her *terhatum*. Additionally, as M. Stol notes, there are inheritance documents that specify that the individual receives money or fields for taking a wife. One text specifically calls this amount a *terhatum*.

Thus, it seems that tying the *terhatum* in the woman’s hem and returning it to the person who paid it had two implications for identity. First, it announced a change in the woman’s status, from single to married, and marked her as a member of her husband’s

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443 ARM 28 36: 88-11
446 Tell Sifr 35:5
family. Second, her future offspring would be identified as members of her husband’s family.

3.3.2 Cutting the Wife’s Hem in Divorce

In several legal texts dealing with divorce, the woman’s hem is cut. Malul considers it to be a legal-symbolic act. Van der Toorn suggests that cutting the hem was the Old Babylonian equivalent of stripping the wife as an act of divorce. This stripping, he argues, is the reverse of the husband veiling the wife as a marriage act. Van der Toorn sees this veiling as a public demonstration of the husband’s responsibility to clothe and feed his wife, and her incorporation into his family. On the other hand, Westbrook argues that cutting the hem is not an act of divorce, but has to do with the issue of marital property: the wife whose hem is cut departs without her dowry. These are not entirely incompatible views. The important issues that they raise—familial incorporation and its responsibilities, and the issue of marital property—can be understood within the framework of the larger issue of identity, specifically, familial affiliation. I suggest that cutting the woman’s hem was the reversal of tying the terhatum in the woman’s hem in marriage. Cutting the woman’s hem changed her familial affiliation and identity, transferring her out of her husband’s family and causing her to lose her identity as a wife; this had important repercussions for her former husband’s responsibilities to her and the marital property. Three issues are important here: 1) What is the woman’s identity after the cutting of her hem? 2) What were the obligations of the husband to his wife, and how did they change after he cut her hem? and 3) What happens to the marital property after the woman’s hem is cut?

447 The following texts are dated to the Old Babylonian period: BAP 91; CT 45 86; VAS 8 9; NCBT 1900; Greengus Ishchali 25. There are also two texts from Nuzi (HSS 19 136 and Gadd no. 33). These texts from Nuzi show a slightly different usage from the rest of the Old Babylonian texts in that the divorce settlement also includes dealings with the woman’s father, which complicate the transaction. For a more detailed treatment of the Nuzi material, see Malul, 203. One Nuzi text (AASOR 16 32) mentions cutting the hem in a context other than divorce. A slave, Kisaya, gives her son, Inzi-Tešup, to her mistress Tulpunnaya. Tulpunnaya then cuts Kisaya’s hem. The significance of this is not entirely clear. For a discussion of this text, see Malul, 153-159.

448 Malul, 197-208.

449 van der Toorn, Family Religion in Babylonia, Syria, and Israel, 42-47.

450 Westbrook argues that divorce took place by speaking a solemn oath: “You are not my wife” or “You are not my husband.” Ancillary aspects, such as the division of property and the custody of children were dealt with through arbitration. See Westbrook, Old Babylonian Marriage Law, 69-71.
3.3.2.1 The Effect of Cutting the Hem on the Woman’s Identity

Cutting the woman’s hem changed her familial affiliation and identity, removing her from her husband’s family and removing her identity as wife. A text from Ishchali gives the clearest evidence for this. The text reads:

The hem of Sîn-nada was cut. She will not contest (it). Abu-ṭabam will not raise claim against Sîn-nada as a wife and Sîn-nada will not say to Abu-ṭabam, “You are my husband.”

After the hem is cut, Abu-ṭabam cannot make claims against Sin-nada as a wife, and Sin-nada cannot call Abu-ṭabam “my husband,” which gives both of them new identities. This has repercussions for both the former husband’s obligations to her and the disposition of the marital property.

3.3.2.2 The Effect of the Cutting of the Hem on the Man’s Obligation to the Woman

Van der Toorn sees veiling as the key marriage act that incorporates the wife into the family and obligates her husband to support her with food and clothing. He cites a text (CT 48 51), where Mār-Sippar takes Tabbitum “for marriage and for clothing and ap-ru-sa₃.” Here, van der Toorn takes the verb apāru as a form of the verb epēru, and thus translates “for…feeding her,” rather than “for hatting” as Westbrook does.

While van der Toorn is correct that both feeding and clothing a wife are obligations of the husband, Westbrook’s translation of “for hatting” is the better interpretation here, because of the natural pairing of clothing and headdresses. Clothing and headdresses are commonly listed together in Old Babylonian dowry texts. For example, in BE 6/1 101 lines 2-3, Damqutum receives “x garments, apart from what she is wearing, x headdresses, apart from what she is wearing (aprat).” In an Old Babylonian letter, Bēlessunu writes to Awil-Adad concerning a slave-girl: “Come, I will provide her with clothing and cover her head, and then I will sell the girl” (alkamma lu labisima lu apiršima suhārtam luddin). While the verb epēru is used in the sense of providing

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452 van der Toorn, Family Religion in Babylonia, Syria, and Israel, 41-45.
453 Ibid., 45 n. 15.
454 Westbrook, Old Babylonian Marriage Law, 122.
455 This is confirmed by CH §133a-135, which specify that if a man is captured, his wife may only enter the house of another if enough provisions are not available in his house. Further, according to CH §145, a husband cannot divorce his wife if she develops la’bum-disease, but must support her as long as she lives.
456 BAP 7, BE 6/1 84, BE 6/1 101, YOS 13 91, BM 16465, and BM 16978. For transliterations and translations of these texts, see Dalley.
457 CT 43 30 lines 23-25a (AbB 1 30)
someone with food rations, it does not appear to be used in conjunction with clothing. Furthermore, the verb *epēru* most commonly appears in personal names, such as Šamaš-epir. Nevertheless, the text clearly implies that the husband was obligated to provide for his wife after her incorporation into his family. What van der Toorn doesn’t point out, however, is that after the text states that Mār-Sippar took Tabbitum “for marriage and for clothing and for hatting,” it states, “They have received 10 shekels of silver as her *terhatum*.” Thus, the payment of the *terhatum* is also related to the obligation to support the woman, as a member of the family. As noted earlier, the *terhatum* seems to become part of the marital property, and passes to the wife’s heirs. In one text, we note that Awiliya gives his wife Naramtum three sons as her heirs. The sons are required to provide for their mother grain, wool, and oil, or they will lose their inheritance. If the *terhatum* is also related to the obligation to support the woman, then it makes sense that the woman’s heirs, who would eventually receive her *terhatum*, would also be obligated to support her after the death of her husband (their father). In fact, CH §171-172 guarantee that a widow is entitled to support from her husband’s estate after his death, and protect her from being forced out by the children. Granted, as discussed in section 3.3.1.4 above, the *terhatum* was not always paid by the husband or father-in-law of the woman, but it seems reasonable that if the woman was incorporated into a new family, her identity as a family member required the family to support her, whether she was incorporated as a wife, as a daughter to be given in marriage sometime in the future, or as a “sister” who would share the same husband. Thus, cutting the hem, into which the *terhatum* had been bound, would release the man from his obligation to support the woman. However, a former husband could retain the marital property in return for continuing to support his ex-wife after the divorce. One text, VAS 8 9, makes it clear that a former husband who failed to do so after cutting his wife’s hem had no claims against her property.

3.3.2.3 The Effect of Cutting the Hem on the Marital Property

As mentioned in section 3.3.2 above, Westbrook argues that cutting the hem is not an act of divorce. Based on the penalty clauses in marriage contracts, in which the penalties are spelled out if either the husband says to his wife, “You are not my wife” or the wife says to her husband, “You are not my husband,” Westbrook posits that the speaking of this statement alone effected the divorce; he argues that cutting the hem must be a separate event, because the statement is not found in the penalty clauses for divorce in marriage contracts and because the statement is omitted in cases of litigation where the cutting of the hem is mentioned. Furthermore, he notes that in the document NCBT 1900, cutting the hem and the divorce appear to be separate events and possibly even

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458 E.g., VAS 108: 15-18: “Warad-Ninsikil and Ibni-Iškur will always provide food rations for Amat-Šamaš, daughter of Dumuq-<Šamaš?>” (ana warkitum ūmi Amat-Šamaš mārat Dumuq-<Šamaš> Arad-Ninsikil u Ibni-Iškur ippirū)
459 PBS 7 51:8
460 CT 48 51, line 9
461 BE 6/2 48
occur on different occasions, based on the fact that one of the four witnesses to the divorce is not listed among the nine witnesses to the cutting of the hem. Thus, he concludes that the cutting of the hem must have another significance, having to do with the issue of marital property: the wife whose hem is cut departs without her dowry.

While Westbrook is correct in seeing the cutting of the hem as related to the issue of marital property, he is mistaken in seeing it as separate from the act of divorce. One document clearly connects cutting the hem with divorce. After the woman’s hem was cut, the document explicitly stated that the man could no longer make claims against the woman as a wife, and that the woman could no longer call the man “my husband.” Furthermore, Westbrook himself demonstrates that Old Babylonian marriage was a multi-staged process; it would make sense that divorce, the unraveling of such a complex arrangement, would be done in multiple steps, and that the issue of marital property would be an important part of this process, not merely an “ancillary aspect” of the ending of a marriage. I suggest that cutting the woman’s hem is one important stage in the divorce process, and that it is the reversal of tying the terhatum in the woman’s hem in the marriage process. Since the terhatum, which became part of the marital property, was tied in the woman’s hem during an early stage in the marriage process, it makes sense that cutting the hem would have something to do with the disposition of the marital property during one stage of the divorce process.

If it were indeed the case that the wife whose hem is cut departs without her dowry, then the circumstances of the divorce would have to be highly unusual. While no text specifically mentions both cutting the hem and the terhatum, we know what happens to the marital property in the case of divorce. If the wife is not at fault, and there are no children involved, then the woman goes out with both her dowry and the terhatum. If there are children, the wife gets both her dowry and a half-share of the estate to raise her children. The only circumstances under which a divorced woman might not receive her dowry back would be if, after deciding to leave, she appropriated goods, squandered her household possessions, or disparaged her husband.

The texts that mention cutting the hem, however, do not seem to support the woman going out without her dowry. In one case (NCBT 1900), although cutting the hem is mentioned, financial arrangements are not. In another case (BAP 91), after the

463 Ibid., 70.
464 Ibid., 70-71.
465 Ishchali 25
466 Westbrook, Old Babylonian Marriage Law, 29-60.
467 Ibid., 70.
468 Even if Westbrook is correct, and the speaking of the statement of divorce and the cutting of the hem occurred on two separate occasions, in my view, they are both still part of the whole process of divorce. Westbrook does acknowledge, however, that it is possible that the witness to the divorce that is “missing” from the list of nine witnesses to the cutting of the hem is included as a member of the local ward, before which the cutting of the hem was performed. See Ibid., 70 n. 11.
469 CH§138
470 CH §137
471 CH §141
woman’s hem is cut, she received divorce money. It would be odd if the woman received divorce money but not her dowry. Thus, no clear link between cutting the hem and the woman going out with her dowry can be established with these texts. A letter from Mari, ARM 10 33 is particularly interesting in this regard. In this letter, Kirûm, the daughter of the king Zimrî-Lîm, writes to her father with several complaints and begs him to bring her home. One of her main complaints is that her husband, Hâya-sûmû, cut her hem before the kings and said, “Go away to the house of your father; I looked away from the face of my wife.” Again, no financial arrangements are mentioned. However, if Hâya-sûmû had intended to deprive Kirûm of her dowry by cutting her hem, it is odd that she does not complain about the loss of her dowry, since she is not reticent about voicing her complaints; the rest of the letter deals with her other grievances: having to listen to the words of Šîmatum, a rival wife, and the fact that Hâya-sûmû took away a woman from her and gave the woman to Šîmatum.

One text that shows a correlation between cutting the hem and the loss of money on the part of the woman is Ishchali 25. A woman, Sîn-nada, is fined 10 shekels of silver, which she pays to Sîn-eribam, her father-in-law. Her hem is cut, and the document states that her husband, Abu-ṭabam, will not raise a claim against her as a wife, and she will not say to Abu-ṭabam, “You are my husband.” Westbrook argues that an inchoate wife who refused to complete the marriage without justification would forfeit her dowry, based on CH §142-143; he suggests that this is the case here. While this situation is entirely plausible, it does not explain why the document goes on to specify that whoever raises a claim in the future will pay one mina of silver. If Sîn-nada had indeed forfeited her dowry (i.e., all she brought with her from her father’s house), then it is not clear what more Abu-ṭabam might hope to gain in the future by raising a claim against her as a wife in the future. Even if Sîn-nada had forfeited her dowry, there is only a correlation between the cutting of the hem and the loss of the dowry, not a clear causation. In fact, another document, CT 45 86, demonstrates that cutting the hem does not cause the woman to lose her dowry.

Westbrook sees CT 45 86, which he interprets as the dissolution of an inchoate marriage, as the strongest evidence that cutting the hem means that the wife goes out without her dowry. Lines 16-34 read:

Before these witnesses they questioned Aham-nirši: “Is this woman your wife?” He said, “Hang me on a peg and dismember me. I will not
marry (her).” Thus he said. They questioned his wife and she said: “I love my husband.” Thus she answered. He did not consent; he tied up her hem and cut it off. The citizens questioned him thus: “The woman who dwelt in the house of your father and whose status as a wife your ward knows, will she go away thus? Make her equal (to what she was) as she came in to you.

Admittedly, this text is problematic grammatically. Westbrook interprets this as a case of kallātum, where a father brings a woman into his household in order to marry her to a member of the household, probably a son. He suggests that the father has died, and the son, Aham-nirši, the man in question, is now refusing to go through with the marriage, although the woman is willing. Westbrook concludes that the man’s case is that he has the right to send the woman away empty-handed because he is not bound by his father’s arrangements; the authorities, having proof that the woman was indeed a kallātum (i.e. had the status of a wife, although the marriage had not yet been formalized), ordered the man to restore to her whatever property she brought with her. In Westbrook’s view, cutting the hem signaled the man’s intention to send the woman out without her dowry. While Westbrook’s general interpretation of this text as a dissolution of an inchoate marriage fits the context, his assertion that the man cut the woman’s hem to signal that he had the right to send her out without a dowry is difficult to sustain. If the woman’s status as a kallātum was known, then it is hard to imagine how the man thought he could get away with sending the woman out without her dowry. Although they do not cover the exact situation, principles from several laws seem to apply to this situation. As Westbrook argues, CH §142-143 cover the case of a woman who refuses to complete a marriage: she keeps the dowry if she refuses on good grounds, but forfeits it if she has no justification for doing so. Presumably, if the man refuses to complete the marriage without justification, the woman would get to keep her dowry. In addition, CH §159-161 regulate the case that although a marriage had been arranged, before it was completed, one of the parties refuses to go through with the marriage. There are penalties for the one who refuses to go through with the marriage. Granted, the father of the man, not the man himself, arranged the marriage; however, it is unlikely that the man could hope to refuse to go through with the marriage without penalty. After all, CH §166 makes it clear that a man is responsible to provide wives for his sons; if he does not do so before his death, the son who had not been provided with a wife is entitled to an additional amount, equal to the value of a terhataum, in addition to his inheritance share, to enable him to take a wife.

(1976): 239. If this verb is a D imperative, however, one would expect ulliā. Another possibility is to take the verb from (h)allātu, “to hang,” e.g., Klaas R. Veenhof, "The Dissolution of an Old-Babylonian Marriage according to CT 45 86," RA 70 (1976): 154-155. He argues that it is the imperative form hullā, which has lost the initial h, rather than the expected allā. Finkelstein, 239, notes the similarity to BE 6/2 58, lines 12-14: ul ahhassi lihułunimma kaspam luṣqi. “I won’t marry her: Let them hang me up (on a peg)—I am prepared (only) to pay money.” In either case, the sense is clear: the man is refusing to marry the woman.

477 Westbrook, Old Babylonian Marriage Law, 70.
478 Ibid., 45-47.
Furthermore, CH §138 deals with the case of a man divorcing a wife who has not borne him children. She is entitled to leave with both her terhatum and her dowry. While the marriage may not yet have been formalized, in a kallītum situation, where a father brings a woman into his household in order to marry her to a member of the household, usually a son, the woman would already have the status of wife (aššūtum), and would be entitled to receive her dowry back. Finally, CH §156 deals with a case where a man has selected a bride for his son. Before the son knows her sexually (i.e. marries her), the man himself has sexual relations with her. Presumably, then, since the marriage will not take place, the woman is entitled to compensation, in addition to receiving back whatever she brought with her; she is then free to marry whom she wants.

Although the father of the man has not had sexual relations with the woman in CT 45 86, as in CH §156, since the marriage is not taking place, it would make sense for her to receive back whatever she brought with her when she leaves that house. Thus, since the woman should clearly receive back whatever she brought with her, cutting her hem cannot mean that she goes out without her dowry. Instead, this must be a case in which the woman wanted the marriage formalized; the man refused, and instead cut her hem, dissolving the inchoate marriage. The officials then required the man to return to the woman whatever she had brought with her, as is only proper, for a woman who is not at fault.

Although the husband would no longer be obligated to support his wife after divorcing her, she could nevertheless let him retain some of the marital property, possibly the terhatum, in return for support, as suggested by Westbrook. This appears to be the situation reflected in one text (VAS 8 9-10). Ennam-Sîn cut the hem of Tabni-Ištar, but since he had not supported her with rations of grain, wool, and oil, his claims and demands against her were rejected, and he was required to make out a no claims tablet for her. Westbrook, then, is correct in pointing out that cutting the hem was related to the issue of marital property; however, Tabni-Ištar clearly retained some of her marital property, since Ennam-Sîn was contesting it, so the data does not appear to fit Westbrook’s assertion that a wife whose hem was cut went out without her dowry. It does suggest, however, that a husband who had divorced his wife by cutting her hem was no longer obligated to support her, unless special arrangements had been made. Instead, she would receive back her dowry and either part of her husband’s property (if she had already provided him with children, as in CH §137), her terhatum, or a divorce settlement (if she had not yet borne children, as in CH 138-140). Thus, the dowry, as part of the marital property, would be returned to the woman after her husband divorced her.

Cutting the hem, then, changes both the woman’s identity (familial affiliation and loss of identity as wife) and the disposition of her marital property as part of the divorce proceedings. Presumably, if she was not at fault, the marital property was returned to her; if she was at fault, as in Ishchali 25, then she forfeited (at least a portion of) the marital property.

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479 See discussion in section above.
481 Ibid., 70.
482 Ibid.
3.4 Conclusion: Why use the hem in changing identity?

In this chapter, I have argued first that the hem of the garment is an item of dress that communicates legal identity. It is not merely a personality symbol; rather, it is used interchangeably with a cylinder seal in expressing the legal identity of the individual involved in the matter, whether as a party or as a witness to the transaction. This legal identity carries with it a legal obligation by the party who sealed or a responsibility to authenticate the transaction by the witness who sealed. Second, I have argued that tying the terhatum in a woman’s hem both changes her familial identity and marital status and confirms the familial affiliation and identity of her future children, with implications for her rights and obligations. Cutting a woman’s hem, then, is a reversal of this identity, and marks her as a divorced woman, which also affects her rights and obligations.

One question remains—why is the hem of the garment used in altering legal identity? I suggest that there are both practical and associative reasons for this. First, with rare exceptions, everyone has at least one garment. Second, all garments have either a hem or a fringe, due to the nature of the weaving process. A woven textile consists of the warp (the threads which run along the length of the fabric) and the weft (the threads which run along the width of the fabric). While a selvage, or non-raveling edge, is created by the looping of the weft around the warp threads at the end of each row, the weft threads will easily unravel. Thus, a hem or a fringe is necessary to keep the weft threads from unraveling. Third, the hem of the garment can be manipulated easily. Since it is at the edge of the garment, it is the part of the garment that is most easily pressed into the still-moist clay of the tablet in legal transactions, assuming that the individual does not wish to disrobe in order to seal the document. It is also easier to tie the terhatum in the hem of the garment in order to alter a woman’s identity from single to married, and to cut the hem of the garment in order to alter her status from married to divorced, than it would be to manipulate another part of the garment.

Fourth, since hems, like cylinder seals, are items of dress that communicate identity, it makes sense that manipulating a hem would result in a corresponding change in identity and legal obligations.

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483 Prisoners of war and defeated enemies are portrayed as naked in art, such as in the Ur-Nammu stele.
484 In line 39 of “Inana’s Descent,” Inana orders Ninšubur to put on a single garment like a poor person.
485 No complete garments have been preserved in the archaeological record. Based on the pictorial evidence, however, it appears that the majority of garments in the Old Babylonian period were wrapped around the body. (These would be classified as body supplements, enclosures, wrapped.) There is some evidence that there may have been tailoring on the sleeves of some garments. (These would be classified as body supplements, enclosures, wrapped and pre-shaped.) The hems and edges of these garments may have been decorated. See Dominique Collon, "Clothing and Grooming in Ancient Western Asia," in Civilizations of the Ancient Near East. Volumes I and II, ed. Jack M. Sasson (Peabody: Hendrickson, 2000), 508-509.
Most important, however, is the figurative reason—hems are associated with money because they can be used to carry money.\textsuperscript{486} Admittedly, this evidence comes from other periods. One Old Assyrian letter orders the recipient to “give (them something, presumably money) from the hem.”\textsuperscript{487} BIN 4 191:7, also from the Old Assyrian period, mentions 1/3 mina of copper and 10 shekels of copper tied in Šu-Bēlum’s hem. One Middle Babylonian text mentions a payment made by an individual “ana sikkītīšu.”\textsuperscript{488} In addition, a late text mentions that a purse might be tied in the hem.\textsuperscript{489} The use of the hem in legal contexts is to be expected, then, because at the heart of all legal transactions is a financial obligation. In cases that involve the use of the hem as a seal, the types of transactions attested either deal with the direct transfer of money (loan, hire, sale, pledge, receipt of silver) or the disposition of goods of value (dispute over property, adoption). In the case of the use of the hem to alter the marital status of a woman, marriage incurs financial obligations (e.g. payment of the terhatum, support of the wife), while divorce also has financial implications (e.g. payment of a divorce settlement, return or forfeiture of the dowry, ending of support of the wife). Thus, it makes sense that the hem of the garment, with both its ability to communicate legal identity and its association with money, is used to alter legal identity.

\textsuperscript{487} ATHE 66: 12-13: \textit{ina sikkim dinama}
\textsuperscript{488} UET 7 38:9
\textsuperscript{489} JTVI 26 155 iiii 8-10
CHAPTER 4
DRESS AND IDENTITY IN RITUAL CONTEXTS

4.1 Introduction

One important function of ritual[^490] is to bring about a change in identity. Dress, whether temporary or permanent, both marks and brings about this change, which cannot be undone except through more ritual[^491]. In Mesopotamia, dress used in ritual is both atypical (not everyday dress) and temporary (except in the case of death). In this chapter, I will examine the way dress is used to bring about a change in the identity of an individual during two phases of the life cycle: birth and death. In birth, dress is used to establish the gender of the newborn, beyond its biological sex. In death, dress is also used to move someone from being among the living to being among the dead.

Although different scholars have different schemes for classifying rituals, which usually support their ritual system, C. Bell has identified six different genres of ritual that are commonly used in most classification systems: rites of passage; calendrical and commemorative rites; rites of exchange and communion; rites of affliction; rites of

[^490]: There is no scholarly consensus as to what ritual is, or how to understand it. It is beyond the scope of this chapter to elaborate on the history of ritual studies. Rather than attempting to define “ritual,” I find C. Bell’s description of attributes of ritual more useful. While acknowledging that this list is neither definitive nor exclusive, Bell enumerates six characteristics of ritual: formalism, traditionalism, invariance, rule-governance, sacrality symbolism, and performance. Formalism is the use of a limited and rigidly organized set of expressions and gestures that form a code of communication and behavior. In traditionalism, conventions represent words and actions as being identical with older cultural precedents, which give it authority. Invariance seems to ignore the passage of time, the personal, and the particular; instead, it anchors itself in the timeless authority of the group, its doctrines, and its practices. Rule-governance refers to the formulation of norms that are imposed, for the purpose of guiding individual activity into acceptable channels. Sacral symbolism uses an object to point to something beyond itself, thereby invoking the values and attitudes associated with a more transcendent or abstract idea. Performance is the use of deliberate, self-conscious symbolic actions that communicate on multiple sensory, emotional, and intellectual levels by using vivid imagery, dramatic sounds, evocative smells, or other sensory experiences; these actions are set apart from day-to-day activities. The purpose of these activities is to model, and thus shape people’s experience and understanding of the world. See Bell, 138-169.

[^491]: Richard Schechner, *Performance Theory*, Revised and expanded ed. (New York and London: Routledge, 1988), 171. Schechner actually refers to the use of “costume,” “body markings,” and “alterations”; these are all types of dress. “Costume” would fall under the subcategory of body supplements, while “body markings” and “alterations” would be body modifications.
feasting, fasting, and festivals; and political rituals.\textsuperscript{492} Of interest here are rites of passage.\textsuperscript{493} A. van Gennep first coined the term “rite of passage” to refer to “ceremonial patterns which accompany a passage from one situation to another or from one cosmic or social world to another.”\textsuperscript{494} In a rite of passage, “someone or some group begins to move to a new place in the social order.” This change in status means that the social order must be readjusted; this readjustment is done using ritual.\textsuperscript{495} Rites of passage include rituals for pregnancy, childbirth, betrothal, marriage, and death. Rites of passage can include up to three different stages: separation, transition, and incorporation.\textsuperscript{496} During separation, the individual is set apart from his or her original situation, world or status. In transition, the individual is in an intermediate stage, between the original situation, world, or status and the new one. In incorporation, the individual is integrated into his or her new situation, world, or status. While in theory a complete rite of passage would require the individual to pass through all three stages, in practice some utilize only one or two of the stages. For example, separation might be emphasized at funerals, while incorporation would be most prominent at weddings.\textsuperscript{497}

\begin{footnotes}
\item[492] Bell, 93-135. Bell (p. 94) notes, however that these categories are a “pragmatic compromise between completeness and simplicity,” because some rituals could fit into other categories, while others could fit into more than one category.
\item[493] Although the other characteristics of ritual (formalism, traditionalism, invariance, rule-governance, and sacral symbolism) may be important features of individual rites of passage, the most important characteristic in defining a rite of passage as a type of ritual is performance, in which the purpose of these activities is to model, and thus shape people’s experience and understanding of the world. Bell notes, “While these rites may be loosely linked to biological changes like parturition and puberty, they frequently depict a sociocultural order that overlays the natural biological order without being identical to it.” See Ibid., 94. In this way, for example, a puberty rite could take place before or after the hormonal and other changes that indicate an individual has reached puberty in a biological sense. In other words, it is the community’s recognition of this change in identity or acceptance into a certain social group through ritual that shapes the new social reality, which is the purpose of performance. Other characteristics of ritual that appear in the Old Babylonian material will be noted as observed.
\item[494] van Gennep, 10.
\item[495] Schechner, 166. Here, Schechner is summarizing the work of V. Turner. For Turner, there are four phases involved in this readjustment of the social order: breach, crisis, redressive action, and reintegration. Breach involves a break in the usual social relationships between individuals or groups. In crisis, the breach widens. A crisis, standing between two stable phases (breach and redressive action) has liminal qualities. Redressive action is used to bring an end to the crisis; ritual is one important means of doing this. In reintegration, the two parties are brought back together; alternatively, the breach is socially recognized and legitimized. See Victor Turner, \textit{Dramas, Fields, and Metaphors: Symbolic Action in Human Society} (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1974), 37-42. Compare this to van Gennep’s three stages, which are summarized below in this section.
\item[496] van Gennep, 11.
\item[497] Ibid.
\end{footnotes}
4.2 Gender Identity at Birth

During the Old Babylonian period, fetuses and newborn babies were considered in many ways to be unshaped beings whose identity needed to be defined and molded. The birth ritual served as a rite of passage that gave the unformed newborn one important aspect of its identity: gender. Dress played a key role in this shaping of identity (dress used in the active construction of identity approach). This dress was both atypical and temporary.

While there is no direct evidence for what took place during a birth ritual, the birth incantations do express how the process of birth was conceptualized. The incantations date back as far as the Fara period and continue into the Neo-Assyrian period. This study will focus on one incantation from the Old Babylonian period, VAS 17 33, but other Old Babylonian incantations will be discussed as well. Although there are similarities and parallels among the incantations, none of them are duplicates.

VAS 17 33 is a Marduk-Ea type of incantation, according to A. Falkenstein’s classification. Falkenstein identified the following characteristics of Marduk-Ea type incantations:

1. an introduction, in which the general activity of the relevant demons or the illness is first described (“Präsentische Thema”)
2. the specifics of the demons’ actions or the illness (“Präteritale Thema”)
3. a dialogue between Marduk and Ea (Asarluhi and Enki in the Sumerian incantations) in which Marduk relates the problem to Ea and asks for his help
4. Ea responds by affirming that Marduk knows what to do, then goes on to explain the ritual actions that Marduk needs to take in order to deal with the issue
5. the desired outcome (“Schlussthema”).

VAS 17 33 skips the generalities (it lacks the “Präsentische Thema”) and begins with the specifics (“Präteritale Thema”): First, the true bull mounts the woman, causing her to become pregnant (lines 1-4). The woman goes through her pregnancy (lines 5-6), and is ready to give birth (lines 6-14). An abbreviated form of the Marduk-Ea dialogue follows, in which Asarluhi (Marduk in the Akkadian incantations) raises his eyes, presumably to appeal to Enki (Ea in the Akkadian incantations) for help, although it is not explicitly

498 The birth incantations have been summarized and described by M. Stol. See Marten Stol, Birth in Babylonia and the Bible: Its Mediterranean Setting (Groningen: Styx, 2000), 59-72.
499 An edition of this text appears in Appendix B.
500 Falkenstein identified five different types of incantations: legitimation, prophylactic, Marduk-Ea, by-forms of the Marduk-Ea type, and “consecration” (“Weihungstyp”). See Adam Falkenstein, Die Haupttypen der Sumerischen Beschwörung literarisch untersucht (Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs, 1931), 20-82.
501 Ibid., 44-67.
stated (line 14). Enki responds (lines 15-18) with the solution to the problem, followed by the desired outcome, that the baby would be released (born) (lines 19-21, 25-27). Lines 22-24, which add additional directions at this point that are not typical for the Marduk-Ea type of incantation, give instructions on what to do, depending on whether the baby is a boy or if it is a girl. Unlike most of the other Old Babylonian birth incantations, this text also contains a ritual written in Akkadian (lines 28-30) (the incantation itself is written in Sumerian), which echoes both the solution and the outcome that Enki outlined in the incantation.502

In the birth incantations, two main stages of rites of passage are emphasized: separation and incorporation. Two kinds of separation are depicted: the period right before the mother gives birth, and the birth itself. The period right before the mother gives birth uses the image of a ship to portray the separation. Although this type of separation does not appear in VAS 17 33, it can be found in other Old Babylonian incantations. The bilingual incantation, AUAM 73.3094, states, “The boat, after spending time at the quay, turned from the quay.” The corresponding Akkadian line reads, “She lay down at the quay of celebration.”503 Another incantation, MLC 1207 (YOS 11 85), states, “At the horizon, the woman giving birth [launched] the ‘gi-min’ boat.”504 Scholars do not agree as to what the boat signifies. Some see the boat as the woman and the cargo as the unborn child.505 Others, such as M. Cohen, understand the boat as the fetus in its amniotic sac.506 Whether the boat refers to the mother or the child, however, it is clear that a separation from one state (pregnancy) is taking place. A third incantation couches the separation of birth in terms of the baby needing to be released: “He (Asarluhi) loosed his (the child’s) knotted bonds. He set the path for him; he opened the way for him.”507 Naturally, birth itself is a separation. After the baby is born, the goddess Gula is called upon to release the umbilical cord, literally and figuratively

502 The other birth incantation that also contains ritual instructions, although extremely abbreviated, is E 47.190. This text was first published by Gertrud Farber, "Another Old Babylonian Childbirth Incantation," JNES 43 (1984): 311-316.  
504 Line 5. For an edition of this text, see Johannes J.A. van Dijk, "Incantations accompagnant la naissance de l'homme," OrNS 44 (1975): 65-69. The term gi-min is unclear. Van Dijk proposes to read it as “the boat and the rowboat” (“la barque et la chaloupe” = “la double barque”). See van Dijk, "Incantations accompagnant la naissance de l'homme," 67 n. 41. While it would be possible to read gi min (literally “double reed”), it is unclear what the significance of a double reed boat would be here. Perhaps it is best to consider gi-min as a type of boat. In any case, the specific nuance of the type of boat does not affect the broader argument here.  
507 YOS 11 86 lines 12ff. For an edition of this text, see van Dijk, "Une incantation accompagnant la naissance de l'homme," 503-505.
separating the from its mother: “May Gula, the true, prudent administrator, release the umbilical cord, the fate of the house of the father, by hand.” In another incantation, Gula then determines the fate of the newborn: “May Gula, the true, prudent administrator, when she has cut the umbilical cord, determine the destiny.”

After birth, the baby needs to be incorporated into the community through a rite of passage. One of the fundamental distinctions in the community is gender; a rite of incorporation, using gendered items of dress, can be used to accomplish this. A. Lynch bases her work on a theoretical model of ritual and change developed by C. Geertz. In Geertz’s view, ritual brings together the real world and the imagined world; the merging of these two worlds into one is what brings about this change in identity. Lynch’s contribution is the use of dress to bring about this merging of two worlds, specifically bringing together real and idealized gender roles, to bring about this transformation. Lynch argues, “what happens within ritual is the meeting of real and idealized/ or imagined conceptions of gender roles as expressed through dress and related behavior.” This use of ritual is only the initial step in the development of gender identity. In addition, through the socialization process, gender identity continues to be shaped even after this ritual. Ethnographic studies also confirm the power of dress to impart gender throughout the lifecycle, even outside of a ritual context. This rite of passage, then, is the initial means of passing on and promoting the gendered behavior (both attitudes and activities) that the society expects from an individual of that gender.

512 One would expect that this gender identity would continue to be developed through other rites of passage. Unfortunately, there is no evidence in Mesopotamia for other rites of passages, such as those focusing on puberty. For a look at the use of dress in the development of gender identity in rites of passage in ancient Mesoamerica, see Rosemary A. Joyce, "Girling the Girl and Boying the Boy: The Production of Adulthood in Ancient Mesoamerica," World Archaeology 31 (2000).
515 An exhaustive discussion of gendered behavior is beyond the scope of this chapter. For a recent discussion of women and gender in Mesopotamia, see Laura D. Steele, "Women and Gender in Babylonia," in The Babylonian World, ed. Gwendolyn Leick (New York: Routledge, 2007).
But would newborn babies need to be incorporated into the community as gendered beings during the Old Babylonian period? The textual evidence confirms that fetuses and newborn babies were considered to be unformed beings. In the literary text “Enki and Ninmah,” Enki proposes a sort of contest—Ninmah will create various people, and he in turn will decree fates for them. After six such imperfect individuals are created, Enki then challenges Ninmah to switch roles—he will create an individual, and Ninmah must decree its fate. Enki creates an individual whose various body parts (head, eyes, neck, lungs, heart, bowels) are afflicted. It has trouble breathing, cannot feed itself, cannot speak, cannot eat bread, and cannot sit.\textsuperscript{516} A. Kilmer suggests that Enki had invented the idea of giving birth, and that Umul was the first baby, noting that the description accurately portrays a newborn, who is unable to feed itself, sit up, control its bowels, etc. She further notes that the name Umul ($u_{4}g̃u_{10}(MU) ul$) means “my day (is) far,” referring to the baby’s date of death far in the future.\textsuperscript{517}

In the birth incantations themselves, the fetus was described in terms of raw precious materials placed into a boat. VAS 17 33 depicts the unborn child as cornelian and lapis lazuli: “She filled the cornelian and lapis lazuli boat with cornelian and lapis lazuli.”\textsuperscript{518} Another Old Babylonian ritual portrays the fetus as cedar, cornelian and lapis lazuli.\textsuperscript{519} In yet another ritual, the unborn child is likened to aromatic substances, cedar, aromatic cedar, cornelian and lapis lazuli.\textsuperscript{520} Note that the descriptions overlap, with the most common raw precious materials being cedar, cornelian and lapis lazuli. What is interesting to note about these raw materials is that some of them, namely the cornelian

\textsuperscript{516} Lines 83-101. For an edition of this text, see Benito, 21-44. For an electronic edition of this text, see “Enki and Ninmah” (ETCSL no. 1.1.2) http://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk/cgi-bin/etcsl.cgi?text=c.1.1.2&display=Crit&charenc=gcirc#.


\textsuperscript{518} VAS 17 33 line 13. For an edition of this text, see van Dijk, "Incantations accompagnant la naissance de l'homme," 62-65. The imagery of cornelian and lapis lazuli is also used in the earlier Ur III text, UM 29-15-367 line 14. An edition of this text was made by van Dijk, "Incantations accompagnant la naissance de l'homme," 53-62.

\textsuperscript{519} MLC 1207 line 7 and the left edge. An edition of this text was produced by van Dijk, "Incantations accompagnant la naissance de l'homme," 65-69.

\textsuperscript{520} AUAM 73.3094 lines 12-18. An edition of this text was prepared by Cohen, "Literary Texts from the Andrews University Archaeological Museum," 133-140. The imagery of the fetus as cedar also appears in the Ur III text AUAM 73.1425 column iii lines 6-7. For an edition of this text, see Marcel Sigrist, "Une tablette d'incantations sumériennes," ASJ 2 (1980): 157-158.
and the lapis lazuli, are the same materials used to make statues of deities.\(^{521}\) The rituals for inducting the cult image\(^{522}\) have been compared to birth rituals. P. Boden writes:

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\(^{521}\) These precious stones appear in the year name Abi-sare 8: mu alan\(^{na4}\) gug\(^{na4}\) za-gin\(_3\) šu-du\(_7\)-a niğ\(_4\)-gul-da-ta ak e\(_2\)-nanna-še\(_3\) i-ni-in-kury\(_4\)-re (The year (Abi-sare) brought a statue perfectly worked with cornelian and lapis lazuli into the Nanna temple.) H. Sauren also cites a text that mentions a statue of Enlil decorated with cornelian. See H. Sauren, "Review of Spycket's Les Statues," *Journal of Semitic Studies* 14 (1969): 118. Late sources also indicate that the body of the statue of a deity may have been made of wood plated with metal, although there is no indication as to the type of wood (i.e. whether it was made of cedar or not). Mallowan speculated that statues from the Jemdet Nasr period may have been made of wood, overlaid with copper, but cited no evidence for this. See M. E. L. Mallowan, "Excavations at Brak and Chagar Bazar," *Iraq* 9 (1947): 91. First millennium sources for the ritual relating to the induction of the cult image suggest that at least a part of a statue was made out of wood. The ritual tablets from Nineveh, K 14027 and K 3248 mention that the carpenter god Ninildu made the statue in line 182, which suggests that wood was one of the raw materials used in the making of the cult statue. For editions of these texts, see Christopher Walker and Michael Dick, *The Induction of the Cult Image in Ancient Mesopotamia: The Mesopotamian Mīş pî Ritual* (Helsinki: The Neo-Assyrian Text Corpus Project, 2001), 36-67. One of the related incantations, STT 199:13-36, refers to various woods from different pure places, including a cedar forest (line 23) and to the work of Ninildu (lines 33-36). An edition of this text appears in Walker and Dick, 114-122. P. Boden also notes that the so-called "Göttertypentext" contain references to the statue’s body being made of wood. See Peggy Jean Boden, "The Mesopotamian Washing of the Mouth (mīş pî) Ritual: An Examination of Some of the Social and Communication Strategies which Guided the Development and Performance of the Ritual which Transferred the Essence of the Deity into Its Temple Statue" (The Johns Hopkins University, 1998), 11.

\(^{522}\) The earliest description of the ritual is found on a 9\(^{\text{th}}\) C. BCE stone tablet from the reign of Nabû-apla-iddina. It describes how the statue of Šamaš had been lost after the destruction of Sippar. The statue was only reconstructed and reinstalled in Šamaš’s temple after a model of the god was found. For more on this tablet, see Christopher E. Woods, "The Sun-God Tablet of Nabû-apla-iddina Revisited," *Journal of Cuneiform Studies* 56 (2004). It is possible, however, that this ritual may have existed as far back as the 3\(^{\text{rd}}\) millennium BCE. Various administrative documents dated to the Ur III period mention supplies for the opening of the mouth (Sumerian *ka dus*) of the statue of the deified Gudea. For example, see ITT 3, 05271 Obv. lines 7-10; ITT 3, 06586 Rev. line 8; ITT 5, 06927; MVN 13, 138; STA 08 Rev. Col. iv lines 1’-5’. Although the items involved differ, they all seem to occur in the same month, *i2ezem-i6li5-si₂* (the third month), and may have been repeated annually. This was first noted by Irene J. Winter, "'Idols of the King': Royal Images as Recipients of Ritual Action in Ancient Mesopotamia," *Journal of Ritual Studies* 6 (1992): 22. For more on the opening of the mouth of the statue of Gudea, see Walther Sallaberger, *Der kultische Kalender der Ur III Zeit* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1993), 281. There are also references to expenditures for the opening of the mouth of an unspecified statue. For example, see MVN 02, 172 obv. lines 6-9. One prayer for Rîm-Sin, king of Larsa, UET 6/1 101 lines 19-20, refers to
The goal of the mīs pî ritual was to transform the material object of the temple statue into the sacred manifestation of the deity. To achieve this end, the statue is ritually guided from an initial status as a material object to a status of non-existence (or existence in another, non-material domain) and finally to the status of a deity present in the physical world. To envision and resolve the abstract metaphysical transformation of the statue, the ritual turns to a more familiar process of primary transformation, human procreation. The allegory of gestation and birth is a guiding thread throughout the ritual.  

Like the cult statues, which are only acknowledged as having the identity of a specific deity after going through a birth-like ritual, Mesopotamian babies, who were also thought of as being formed of raw materials before birth, needed to go through a ritual to take on their gender identities. This gender identity was not only based on the sex of the infant, but was socially constructed through the rite of passage. In the Old Babylonian period, it is obvious

“Indagara, the sanga-priest, who (performs) the opening of the mouth of the gods in heaven and the netherworld, who knows the meaning of obscure tablets, craftsman of the great gods.” For an edition of this text, see Dominique Charpin, Le clergé d'Ur au siècle d'Hammurabi (Geneva and Paris: Libraire Droz, 1986), 344-347. 

Boden, 170. 

While it is beyond the scope of this chapter to give a complete summary of gender theory, a few definitions and remarks are necessary here. The distinction between sex and gender goes back to S. de Beauvoir, who writes, “One is not born, but rather becomes, woman.” See Simone de Beauvoir, The Second Sex, trans., Constance Borde and Sheila Malovany-Chevallier (London: Jonathan Cape, 2009), 293. Initially, sex was considered a matter of biology, while gender was achieved through various means (psychological, cultural, social). Scholars soon found that these definitions were both confusing and simplistic. Defining “sex” as a matter of biology can become complicated when two or more biological criteria do not align (chromosomal type, external genitalia, and secondary sex characteristics can be at odds with each other, such as an individual with XX chromosomes with female external genitalia, but male secondary sex characteristics such as facial hair or an enlarged larynx). If one “achieves” gender, then the implications are that gender is fixed, unvarying, and static after a certain point. C. West and D. Zimmerman suggest, instead that there need to be distinctions among three terms: sex, sex category, and gender. According to West and Zimmerman, “Sex is a determination made through the application of socially agreed upon biological criteria for classifying persons as females or males.” For example, while either physical sex characteristics (genitalia) or chromosomal type could be used, sex would be defined by the specific society. See Candace West and Don H. Zimmerman, "Doing Gender," Gender & Society 1 (1987): 127. “Sex category” is the group in which one demonstrates membership through “socially required identificatory displays,” which can be independent of one’s sex. See West and Zimmerman: 127. This is closer to the older definition of gender. Gender, on the other hand, is “the activity of managing situated
that there were differences between infants with male or female physical sexual characteristics; in fact, one of the birth incantations describes a boat loaded with either cornelian or lapis lazuli:

She [filled] the boat of cornelian and lapis lazuli with cornelian and lapis lazuli. Like a boat of cornelian and lapis lazuli [filled with] corn[elian and lapis lazuli], she does not know (if) it is cornelian; [she does not know] (if) it is lapis lazuli. (If) it is cornelian, she does not know; (If) it is lapis lazuli [she does] no[t know].

Most scholars agree that this refers to the fact that the woman does not know whether the baby is a boy or a girl; they differ, however, as to which sex each of the precious stones refers to. Nevertheless, despite the fact that the baby had a sex before it was born, its gender still needed to be established or confirmed during the birth ritual.

conduct in light of normative conceptions of attitudes and activities appropriate for one’s sex category. Gender activities emerge from and bolster claims to membership in a sex category.” See West and Zimmerman: 127. These actions do not take place in a vacuum, but in social interaction with other individuals, who, presumably, ascribe the same meaning to the actions.


526 AUAM 73.3094, lines 18-21

527 Most scholars suggest that cornelian stands for a girl, and lapis lazuli stands for a boy, based on the grammatical gender of these words in Akkadian. The word for cornelian, sāmtu, is feminine, while the word for lapis lazuli, uqnu, is masculine. See Farber, "Another Old Babylonian Childbirth Incantation," 316 n. 6; Stol, Birth in Babylonia and the Bible: Its Mediterranean Setting, 62. J.A. Scurlock, however, argues the opposite. She points out that in all of the birth incantations, cornelian is always mentioned before lapis lazuli. She feels it would be odd if a female baby was always mentioned before a male baby, because after the baby is born, the male child always has his gendered items of dress put in his hand or shown to him before the female child does. See Scurlock: 144, 169 n. 97. However, there is no direct evidence linking either cornelian or lapis lazuli to a specific sex, in either the textual or the archaeological record. It is more likely that the intent was to compare them to raw precious materials, as both cornelian and lapis lazuli were used in statues (as noted earlier in this section). Since both stones were used for statues, it is uncertain that the two stones, respectively, were to be associated with a specific gender.
Dress played an important role in establishing the newborn’s gender identity. As part of the birth ritual, various items of dress were used; these differed, depending on whether the baby was male or female. VAS 17 33 states: “If is a male, let him seize a weapon and his ax, the strength of his heroism, in his hand. If it is a female, let her have a spindle and her hair clasp in her hand.” These same items are found in another incantation, UM 29-15-367. The incantation MLC 1207 lists only a weapon for the male baby and a spindle for the female baby. A syllabic version, AUAM 73.3094, has a variant, in which the infants are to look at, rather than hold, the appropriate objects. Having the newborn hold the items clearly shows the performative aspect of ritual; the similarities among the various incantations as to what should happen with the newborn suggest formalism, with the limited set of gestures. The weapon, the ax, the spindle, and the hair clasp are items of dress, as defined in the introduction. These are all supplements to the body, hand-held objects, intended to be held by the self (held in the hand of the newborn).

Other textual evidence confirms that these items of dress are associated with a set gender (dress as material object approach), more specifically with gendered activities. In the literary letters, women walk around with the spindle and hair clasp, as opposed to the

528 Stol points out that in Tablet 36 of the so-called Diagnostic Handbook, which comes from the 1st millennium BC, the sex of the unborn child can be ascertained by the appearance of the pregnant women. See Stol, Birth in Babylonia and the Bible: Its Mediterranean Setting, 207. Colors are significant in lines 1-4, 7, 9-10, 13-14, 19, 24-25, 28-29, 31, 35, 45-49, 51-53, 100, 101. Left and right are relevant in lines 11, 12, 19, 22-23, 63, 95, 97. Other key features affecting the sex appear in lines 6, 8, 15, 50, 57, 64-68, 70, 72-76, 90-91, and 93. For a transliteration and translation of this text, see René Labat, Traité akkadien de diagnostics et pronostics médicaux. I. Transcription et Traduction. (Paris: Académie internationale d'histoire des sciences, 1951), 200-213.

529 Lines 22-24.

530 UM 29-15-367, lines 45-47. An edition of this text was prepared by van Dijk, "Incantations accompagnant la naissance de l'homme," 53-62. An Ur III incantation, AUAM 73.1425, is broken, so only the items for a female (a spindle and a hair clasp) are preserved in Col. iv lines 10-11. For an edition of this text, see Sigrist: 157-158.


532 See edition by Cohen, "Literary Texts from the Andrews University Archaeological Museum," 135-140. The male newborn is to look at his weapon (gštukul-a-ni), while the female is to look at her “crucible” (ga-ri-im-ma-a-ni, possibly a syllabic writing for agarin1-a-ni). Stol suggests that the male’s “weapon” refers to his penis, while the female’s “crucible” may refer to her vagina. Stol, Birth in Babylonia and the Bible: Its Mediterranean Setting, 63 n. 94. While this suggestion is attractive because of the use of the primary physical sexual characteristics, it is problematic. First, it would be physically impossible to show a female infant her own vagina. Second, the text right before this word is broken. Given that the gštukul for the male appears in all the other incantations, it is likely that whatever the “garim” is, it is also an object commonly associated with females, much like the spindle and hair clasp.
The spindle and hair clasp are also items that Inana receives from Enki as part of her functions (Sumerian mar-za, the emesal form of garza) in “Enki and the World Order.” A hair clasp is one of the items that Ur-Namma gives to Hušbisag, the wife of Namtar. Women also are described as holding a spindle. The spindle is also associated with Inana in other contexts as well. In one text, Inana is given the spindle to hold. Spindles also appear in Old Babylonian lists of items that women

533 “Letter from Šulgi to Puzur-Šulgi” lines 11-12. For a transliteration and translation of this text, see Piotr Michalowski, The Correspondence of the Kings of Ur. An Epistolary History of an Ancient Mesopotamian Kingdom, MC 15 (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2011), 369-375. For an electronic edition of this text, see “Letter from Šulgi to Puzur-Šulgi about the fortress Igi-hursag” Version B (from Susa) line 9-10 (ETCSL no. 3.1.08) http://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk/cgi-bin/etcsl.cgi?text=c.3.1.08&display=Crit&charenc=gcirc#. It also appears in “Letter from Aradgu to Šulgi 2” lines 3-4. For a transliteration and translation of this text, see Michalowski, The Correspondence of the Kings of Ur. An Epistolary History of an Ancient Mesopotamian Kingdom, 293-295. For an electronic edition of this text, see “Letter from Aradgu to Šulgi about bandits and Apillaša” lines 3-4 (ETCSL no. 3.1.11) http://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk/cgi-bin/etcsl.cgi?text=c.3.1.11&display=Crit&charenc=gcirc#.

534 This line does not appear in C. Benito’s edition of the text. (See Benito, 85-137.) For an electronic edition of this text “Enki and the World Order” line 434 (ETCSL no. 1.1.3) http://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk/cgi-bin/etcsl.cgi?text=c.1.1.3&display=Crit&charenc=gcirc#. Note that Inana actually uses the spindle in line 443. While it is unclear in this context whether these functions that Inana gets from Enki are specific to Inana or whether they can be applied more generally to women, the fact that the spindle and hair clasp are listed between “women’s speech” (line 433) and “women’s adornments” (line 444), it suggests that these items might also be intended for women.

535 Line 111. For an edition of this text, see Flückiger-Hawker, 101-142. It also appears in line 84’ of the version from Susa. See Flückiger-Hawker, 154-163. For an electronic edition of this text, see “The Death of Ur-Namma” (Ur-Namma A), Version from Nippur line 111 (ETCSL no. 2.4.1.1) http://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk/cgi-bin/etcsl.cgi?text=c.2.4.1.1&display=Crit&charenc=gcirc#; “The Death of Ur-Namma” (Ur-Namma A), Version from Susa Segment C line 43 (ETCSL no. 2.4.1.1) http://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk/cgi-bin/etcsl.cgi?text=c.2.4.1.1&display=Crit&charenc=gcirc#.

536 “The Instructions of Šuruppak” line 227. For an edition of this text, see Bendt Alster, Wisdom of Ancient Sumer (Bethesda: CDL Press, 2005), 56-100. For an electronic edition of this text, see “The instructions of Šuruppak” line (ETCSL no. 5.6.1) http://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk/cgi-bin/etcsl.cgi?text=c.5.6.1&display=Crit&charenc=gcirc#.


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receive as part of their dowry. Furthermore, in one text, Enlil and Ninlil give Inana the capacity to invert gender. She is able to turn a man into a woman and a woman into a man. This inversion of gender takes place through the use of dress. Young women dress like men on the right side (of their bodies), while young men dress like women on the left side (of their bodies). Moreover, in these inversions of gender, men carry spindles while women carry weapons. While these items of dress that are placed into the hands of newborns are clearly gendered, they are not standard dress for infants. Due to the nature of Mesopotamian art, which tends to be found in royal contexts or is otherwise intended for the public sphere, infants and babies are not typically portrayed. Where it does exist, however, the pictorial evidence confirms that infants and young children do not appear to wear gendered dress; more often than not, infants and young children are naked. Several terracotta

538 BE 6/1 84 includes a box full of spindles in line 28. For editions of this text, see Dalley: 60-62; Westbrook, Old Babylonian Marriage Law, 113. YOS 13 91 line 20’, CT 47 83 line 8’, and BM 16978 line 7’ also include a box of spindles. For an edition of these text, see Dalley: 63-64, 66-67, and 73-74. An edition of CT 47 83 also appears in Westbrook, Old Babylonian Marriage Law, 121.

539 “Išme-Dagan K” line 21. For an edition of this text, see W. H. Ph. Römer, "Sumerische Hymnen, II," BiOr 45 (1988): 31-35. For an electronic edition of this text, see “A hymn to Inana for Išme-Dagan (Išme-Dagan K)” line 21 (ETCSL no. 2.5.4.11) http://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk/cgi-bin/etcsl.cgi?text=c.2.5.4.11&display=Crit&charenc=gcirc#.

540 “Išme-Dagan K” lines 22-23. The idea of dressing like a male on the right side and like a woman on the left side in the context of the cult of Inana also appears in “Iddin-Dagan A” lines 60-65. For an edition of this text, see Daniel Reisman, “Two Neo-Sumerian Royal Hymns” (Ph.D. diss., University of Pennsylvania, 1969), 147-178. For an electronic edition of this text, see “A šir-namursaša to Ninsiana for Iddin-Dagan (Iddin-Dagan A)” lines 60-65 (ETCSL no. 2.5.3.1) http://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk/cgi-bin/etcsl.cgi?text=c.2.5.3.1&display=Crit&charenc=gcirc#.

541 “Išme-Dagan K” line 24.

542 There is some question as to how accurately images express social reality. In fact, images may express an idealized view of dress rather than actual practice. See Genevive Fisher and Diana DiPaolo Loren, "Embodying Identity in Archaeology: Introduction," Cambridge Archaeological Journal 13 (2003): 227. They note that one Mesopotamian study argues that the figures on cylinder seals portray ideological constructs of gender relations and identities. For this study, see Susan Pollock and Reinhard Bernbeck, "And They Said, Let Us Make Gods in Our Image," in Reading the Body: Representations and.
plaques from the Old Babylonian period portray a goddess breast-feeding an infant, while two more infant heads appear to emerge from her shoulders. The nursing infant does not seem to be clothed—only its head and one arm (with what may be a band or bracelet around it), grasping the goddess’s breast are portrayed. The rest of the infant is wrapped in the goddess’s garment.\footnote{One example of this plaque, IM 9574, was published by Ruth Opificius, \textit{Das Altbabylonische Terrakottarelief} (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1961), Plate 4 no. 224; E.D. van Buren, "A Clay Relief in the Iraq Museum," \textit{AfO} 9 (1934): 166. Another example of this plaque is AO 12442. See van Buren, "A Clay Relief in the Iraq Museum," 167. Other examples include HMA 9-708 and 9-709. See Yoko Tomabechi, \textit{Catalogue of Artifacts in the Babylonian Collection of the Lowie Museum of Anthropology}, Bibliotheca Mesopotamica 15 (Malibu: Undena, 1984), Plates 13 and 15. It is possible that these plaques were made from the same or similar molds.} An example of this plaque, HMA 9-708, appears in Figure 4.

Other terracotta plaques confirm that infants and young children are either ambiguously dressed or lack dress altogether. One terracotta plaque, HMA 9-722, has a similar theme (a goddess breast-feeding an infant, with two infant heads emerging from her shoulders), although in this case, both the goddess and the infant are unclothed. See Figure 5.

544 In one plaque, a child sits on its mother’s lap and suckles. While the lower half of the child’s body appears to be wrapped in a garment, the upper half of its body appears to be unclothed, as evidenced by bare shoulders and arms (except for a band/bracelet around the wrist). See André Parrot, *Sumer: The Dawn of Art*, trans., Stuart Gilbert and James Emmons (New York: Golden Press, 1961), 240 Fig. 295.
Another plaque depicts a woman nursing a young child on her lap. The young child appears to be nude.\textsuperscript{545} An additional plaque depicts a goddess holding a baby or young child in her arms; although much of the child’s torso is either broken or obscured by the goddess’ hands, the child’s leg is clearly unclothed.\textsuperscript{546} Another fragment of a plaque also shows a woman nursing a child on her lap. Only the torso of the child remains; it appears to be bare.\textsuperscript{547} Yet another plaque depicts a naked woman holding a nursing infant in her arms; the infant also appears to be unclothed.\textsuperscript{548} A seated woman wearing a headdress

\textsuperscript{545} H. de Genouillac, \textit{Fouilles de Telloh}, vol. II (Paris: P. Geuthner, 1936), Plate 102, No. 3.
\textsuperscript{546} Opificius, Plate 4, no. 227.
\textsuperscript{547} Ibid., Plate 4, no. 240.
\textsuperscript{548} For an image, see P. van der Meer, "Voorlopige Verslagen gepubliceerd door het Oriëntalisch Centrum Benelux voor het Wetenschappelijk Onderzoek van het Nabije Oosten, No. 2. 6. Lijst der oudheden gekocht in Baghdad. a) De onbeschreven voorwerpen," \textit{JEOL} 12 (1951/1952): Plate 44 e.
and a flounced dress nurses a naked infant in another plaque.\textsuperscript{549} One plaque portrays a seated goddess in profile, nursing an infant wearing a long garment; its gender is unclear.\textsuperscript{550} Only children past a certain age seem to wear gendered garments.\textsuperscript{551} One

\textsuperscript{549} For an image, see Albert T. Clay, "The Art of the Akkadians," \textit{Art and Archaeology} 5 (1917): Figure 3, top row, 4th from left; E.D. van Buren, \textit{Clay Figurines of Babylonia and Assyria} (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1930), Figure 59.

\textsuperscript{550} For a photo, see Clay: Figure 3, top row, 3rd from left; van Buren, \textit{Clay Figurines of Babylonia and Assyria}, Figure 101.

\textsuperscript{551} Much of the evidence for the dress of older children comes from either an earlier (Early Dynastic) or later (Neo-Assyrian) period. R. Harris points out that an Early Dynastic plaque portrays the daughter and sons of Ur-Nanše. While the sons are dressed alike (only the lower body is clothed), the daughter’s clothing is distinct from theirs. While it is impossible to tell their exact ages, the height (the daughter is the tallest, and the sons vary slightly in height) suggests their relative ages. See Harris, \textit{Gender and Aging in Mesopotamia}, 22. P. Albenda points out that in the Assyrian reliefs, young children are usually naked. See Pauline Albenda, "Woman, Child, and Family: Their Imagery in Assyrian Art," in \textit{La femme dans le Proche-Orient antique: Compte rendu de la XXXIIIe Rencontre Assyriologique Internationale} (Paris, 7-10 Juillet 1986) (Paris: Editions Recherche sur les Civilisations, 1987), 19. One of the reliefs of Ashurnasirpal II portrays a young child who is accompanying women prisoners. The child is naked (except for what appears to be a belt around his waist). For a copy of this image, see E.A.W. Budge, \textit{Assyrian Sculptures in the British Museum, Reign of Ashurnasirpal, 883-849 B.C.} (London: The British Museum Press, 1914), Plate 23 No. 2. Reliefs dated to the reign of Sennacherib also portray children accompanying their mothers. In one relief, BM 124989, the daughters, who based on their height are clearly older children, are dressed identically to their mothers. They are leaving the city of Lachish. For a photo, see Pauline Albenda, "Western Asiatic Women in the Iron Age: Their Image Revealed," \textit{The Biblical Archaeologist} 46 (1983): 85. In another relief, BM 124786, a much younger child (based on his height) is naked. He and his mother are from the region of the Zagros Mountains. For a photo, see Albenda, "Western Asiatic Women in the Iron Age: Their Image Revealed," 85. The reliefs from the reign of Assurbanipal have similar evidence. In Room F, Slab 4, children in gender ambiguous dress accompany their parents, who are prisoners. See R.D. Barnett, \textit{Sculptures from the North Palace of Ashurbanipal at Nineveh (668-627 B.C.)} (London: The British Museum, 1976), Plate XVII. Another scene of prisoners appears in Room F, Slabs 7-9. Here, several young naked children either walk alongside of their parents, hold a parent’s hand, or ride on a parent’s shoulder. Two older children, dressed similarly to the women, ride on a cart. Two other young children ride on an equine. They are dressed identically except for their hairstyles, which may indicate that they are of different genders. See Barnett, Plate XIX. In Courtyard J, Slabs 10-12, a naked child accompanies a group of female Babylonian prisoners. A child dressed identically to the men accompanies a mixed group of male and female prisoners. See Barnett, Plate XXX. In Room S’, a female Babylonian prisoner carries a naked child on her shoulder. See Barnett, Plate LX. In Room V'/ T', female Elamite prisoners carry naked infants and young children. See Barnett, Plate LXIII. Also in Room V'/T’, Slab F, the top register portrays the surrender of Babylonian prisoners. In the top register, two
terracotta relief shows a girl wearing what appears to be a flounced dress, seated next to a woman.  

Infants and very young children, then, tend to be portrayed as naked (lacking dress altogether), or in gender ambiguous dress. This ambiguous dress consists of either a long garment (which can be classified as a body supplement, a wrapped enclosure) or a band around the wrist (which can be classified as a body supplement, a pre-shaped enclosure).

Thus, the use of weapons and axes, and spindles and hair clasps (all of which are body supplements, objects held in the hand by the self) for newborns the birth ritual makes it clear that these are not standard, everyday items of dress for infants. Moreover, the infant holds them only temporarily in the birth ritual. The employment of these items in the birth ritual, then, is significant. Since these items of dress are clearly gendered, they can be used in this rite of passage to bring together the real world (a newborn lacking gender) with the imagined world (idealized gender roles) in order to begin the process of establishing the newborn’s gender identity.

4.3 Change of Identity in Death and Burial Rituals

In this section, I argue that dress is used to bring about a change of identity in the deceased person, from being among the living to being among the dead. This dress is specifically used for burial, and is not the dress that was used previously by the deceased person in everyday life. Unlike the dress used in other life-cycle rituals, this dress is permanent.

Although there is little direct textual evidence for funerary rituals in Mesopotamia, it is possible to reconstruct some of the actions surrounding these activities, based on the provision of burial goods and the treatment of the bodies. In

older girls, dressed similarly to the women, ride on a cart. In the second register, a young naked boy accompanies male Elamite prisoners. See Barnett, Plate LXVIII. Another relief, Slab B, depicts more Elamite prisoners. Three children appear; two are dressed similarly to the men, while one is dressed like the women. See Barnett, Plate LXIX.  

It is uncertain who the woman is. It is possible that she is a priestess or a goddess, as suggested by Opificius, 78. L. Legrain suggests that this is an image of a mother and a daughter. See L. Legrain, "Les dieux de Sumer," RA 32 (1935): 120. A photo of this relief can be found in Legrain: 120; C. L. Woolley, "The Excavations at Ur, 1923-1924," AntJ 5 (1925): Plate 8 No. 2, 2nd from the top left.

Some aspects of funerary rituals appear in various texts. These texts have been collected in Antoine Cavigneaux and Farouk N.H. Al-Rawi, Gilgamesh et la mort. Textes de Tell Haddad VI avec un appendice sur les textes funéraires sumériens, ed. `, CM 19 (Groningen: Styx, 2000), 65-76.

There appear to have been at least three types of funerary rituals: rituals associated with the preparation of the body of the deceased and burial, mourning rituals, and continuing rituals for the deceased after their death. Not all rituals are equally attested in all time periods. The evidence for burial practices, which may reflect ritual activities, prior to the Old Babylonian period is as follows:
The earliest traces of burial practices in Mesopotamia come from the Halaf period (c. 5200-4500 BC) settlements of Yarim Tepe. There are distinct differences between the burials in the cemetery outside the settlement and the burials within the settlement itself. The majority of the burials in the cemetery were of adults, with the bodies lying on their right or left sides in a tightly flexed position. In general, the grave goods include vessels made of ceramic or alabaster, pins and axes made of hematite, and beads and pendants made of shell or stone. See N. Ya. Merpert and R. M. Munchaev, "Burial Practices of the Halaf Culture," in Early Stages in the Evolution of Mesopotamian Civilization: Soviet Excavations in Northern Iraq, ed. Norman Yoffee and Jeffery J. Clark (Tuscon and London: The University of Arizona Press, 1993), 218-219. In contrast, the burials within the settlement itself were primarily of infants or juveniles, but showed more variability (inhumations, cremations, or cranial burials). The inhumations were similar to the burials in the cemetery except for the age at death (the bodies were lying on their sides, but with fewer grave goods). The cremations, however, were more variable: the majority appeared to have been cremated elsewhere before burial, although there was evidence for burial within a cremation period, as well as the placement of cremated bones in a ceramic vessel. Grave goods similar to those associated with the inhumations were also present. See Merpert and Munchaev, 210-217. Finally, there was evidence for cranial burials, in which the cranium was interred separately from the rest of the remains. No grave goods are associated with these burials. See Merpert and Munchaev, 217.

In the later Ubaid period (c. 4300-3500 BC), the dead were mostly interred in cemeteries outside the settlement, except for children, who were still buried under houses in the settlement itself. The bodies were also buried on their sides in the flexed position, and grave goods included beads and female figurines. See Gebhard Selz, "Zu „Leben“ und „Tod“ nach Quellen der mesopotamischen Frühzeit--Interaktionen zwischen Diesseits und Jenseits," in Zwischen Euphrat und Tigris : Österreichische Forschungen zum Alten Orient, ed. Friedrich Schipper (Wien: Lit, 2004), 43.

Little evidence for burial exists from the following Uruk period (late 4th-early 3rd millennium BC). See Selz, 33-34. In the following Jemdet Nasr period (c. 2850-2700 BC), there is evidence for burial in great cemeteries. Here, there is also clear gender distinction in burial—the bodies of women were generally placed on their left side, while those of men were placed on their right side. See Jean-Daniel Forest, Les pratiques funéraires en Mésopotamie du 5e millénaire au début du 3e, étude de cas (Paris: Editions Recherche sur les civilisations, 1983), 129. During this period, distinctions in burial (e.g., grave goods) seem to have been based on kinship groupings, rather than sex or age. See Petr Charvát, Mesopotamia Before History (London and New York: Routledge, 2002), 204-205.

In the Early Dynastic I (ED I) period (c. 2700 BC), distinctions in burial based on kinship groupings continue. See Charvát, 205. Archaeological evidence for cemeteries as the site of communication between the living and the dead through ancestor cults is suggested through the use of structures that contained both burials and evidence of ash, bones, and sherds. Storage jars and drinking cups were also found. See Charvát, 223. Distinctions in burial based on kinship groups continues into the Early Dynasty II (ED II) period (before c. 2500 BC), but seem to disappear by the Early Dynastic III (ED III).
the Old Babylonian period, there is indirect evidence for rituals dealing with the preparation of the corpse and burial, \footnote{555} mourning activities, \footnote{556} and continuing offerings

(\footnote{555} There is also some evidence for burial practices during the Old Babylonian period. There is archaeological evidence for burial under the floor of the houses of the upper class. See H. Gasche, "Le sondage A: l'ensemble I" in \textit{Tell ed-Dēr II. Progress Reports (First Series)}, ed. Leon de Meyer (Leuven: Peeters, 1978), 107-108; Gasche, \textit{La Babylonie au 17e siecle avant notre ère: approche archéologique, problèmes et perspectives}, 60-61; Maria Krafeld-Daugherty, \textit{Wohnen im Alten Orient: Eine Untersuchung zur Verwendung von Räumen in altorientalischen Wohnhäusern} (Münster: Ugarit-Verlag, 1994), 181-182; van der Toorn, \textit{Family Religion in Babylonia, Syria, and Israel}, 61. Textual evidence comes from one letter, AbB 1 140, which mentions the burial of a sister in the house (lines 17-25). Naturally, burial in separate cemeteries (rather than under the house), both inside and outside the city walls, also took place. For the evidence at Tell ed-Dēr, see Gasche, "Le sondage A: l'ensemble I", 108-118. Even at sites where no cemeteries have yet been excavated, cemeteries must have existed, since the occurrence of burials under the house is too small to have accounted for the entire population. See E. Strommenger, "Grab (I. Irak und Iran)," in \textit{RIA 3. Fabel-Gyges}, ed. Ernst Weidner and Wolfram von Soden (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1957-1971), 591.

At Tell ed-Dēr, a corpse was generally laid on its back, with the legs flexed to either the left or the right. Only a few instances of corpses laid on their sides are attested. The corpses of both adults and infants appear to have been treated in the same way. See Gasche, \textit{La Babylonie au 17e siecle avant notre ère: approche archéologique, problèmes et perspectives}, 62. Sometimes, one or both hands were placed in front of the face. In this case, a plate or a bowl was often placed in the hands, near the mouth. See Gasche, \textit{La Babylonie au 17e siecle avant notre ère: approche archéologique, problèmes et perspectives}, 62.

During the Larsa period at Ur, the body was dressed and laid on its side. Both the legs and the arms were bent. The arms were positioned with the hands in front of the face, sometimes holding a cup near the mouth. See Woolley and Mallowan, \textit{The Old Babylonian Period}, 34.

At Nippur, the corpses were generally placed on their sides with legs flexed. One or both hands were placed either near the head or between the chest and the pelvis. See Donald E. McCown, Richard C. Haines, and assisted by Donald P. Hansen, \textit{Nippur I. Temple of Enlil, Scribal Quarter, and Soundings}, OIP 78 (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1967), 118.)
for the deceased.\textsuperscript{557} It is clear that through the preparation of the corpse and burial, the dead went through at least one stage in this rite of passage: incorporation into the world of the dead, the netherworld.

We know that after being interred, the deceased kept their basic identity (name, familial affiliation)—the main change in identity would be moving from being among the living to being among the dead. That the dead retained their name and familial affiliation is clear from an Old Babylonian prayer\textsuperscript{558} commissioned by Sin-nāṣir. This prayer, addressed to the moon god Sin, asks Sin to release Sin-nāṣir’s ancestors (presumably from the netherworld), so that they can eat his bread and drink his water. The prayer then goes on to list several generations of Sin-nāṣir’s deceased family members by name, which suggests that the dead keep this component of their identity.

However, even though the dead kept some basic elements of their identity, such as their name and familial affiliation, we know that there was some change in identity, because in some way, the dead became “gods” after death. The legal texts, primarily adoption texts from Sippar, describe death in terms of being taken away by one’s gods: \textit{ilāšu ıqterūšu} or \textit{ilāša ıqterūša}.\textsuperscript{559} In these texts, the concern is the obligation of one party (e.g. the adoptive child) to the other (e.g. the adoptive parent) until the other party (e.g. the adoptive parent) dies (is taken away by his or her gods). Here, as van der Toorn suggests, “gods” must refer to the deceased ancestors, since families were usually devoted to only one god in particular.\textsuperscript{560} In addition, as van der Toorn argues, the dead were divinized, which means that they belong to the realm of the gods. One piece of evidence comes from certain divine names that were originally human names such as Ikrub-El (El has blessed), Itūr-Mer (Mer has returned), Ikūnum (He is steadfast), and

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\textsuperscript{556} Descriptions of mourning appear in the literary texts. Ġeštinanna mourns for her brother Dumuzi by crying and scratching her body in “Dumuzi’s Dream” lines 240-244. For an edition of this text, see Alster, \textit{Dumuzi’s Dream: Aspects of Oral Poetry in a Sumerian Myth}, 52-83. For an electronic edition of this text, see “Dumuzid’s Dream” (ETCSL no. 1.4.3) \url{http://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk/cgi-bin/etcsl.cgi?text=c.1.4.3&display=Crit&charenc=gcirc#}. Various deities mourned for Inana when she was trapped in the netherworld in Inanna’s Descent to the Netherworld. Ninšubur lamented Inana, scratched her body, and clothed herself appropriately (lines 176-181). Ninšubur (line 308 ), Šara (line 331), and Lulal (line 341) sat in the dust and dressed in a filthy garment. For an edition of this text, see Sladek, 103-181. For an electronic edition of this text, see “Inana’s descent to the nether world” (ETCSL no. 1.4.1) \url{http://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk/cgi-bin/etcsl.cgi?text=c.1.4.1&display=Crit&charenc=gcirc#}.

\textsuperscript{557} See discussion below in this section. For a longer discussion of funerary offerings for the deceased during the Old Babylonian period, see van der Toorn, \textit{Family Religion in Babylonia, Syria, and Israel}, 48-55.


\textsuperscript{559} For the major references, see the CAD entry on \textit{qerû} (CAD Q p. 242-243). See van der Toorn, \textit{Family Religion in Babylonia, Syria, and Israel}, 57.

\textsuperscript{560} Ibid.
Iqūlam (He has paid attention to me). These individuals appear to have been treated as divinities after their death. For example, Ikūnum had a priest for his cult at Sippar. The geographical name, Titur-Šumi-ahhiya, contains the divinized name Šumi-ahhiya, although it was originally a human name. Furthermore, one text is an incantation against the divinized dead. This makes it clear that the dead do not belong to the same realm of existence as the living; in some way, they have a new identity.

It is also clear that the dead take on a new identity because a recently deceased person is also described as a “traveler” (Sumerian girš) in BM 24975, which relates the death of a man beloved by a young woman, and what she will do for him. The Sumerian word girš is usually translated as “stranger (foreigner)” because of its equation with the Akkadian ubārum in OB Nippur Izi Tab. I, 460. However, in the context of

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561 Ibid., 57-58.
563 Ibid.
566 For an edition of this text, see http://oracc.museum.upenn.edu/dcclt/Q000050. Granted, in some contexts, girš has to be translated “stranger (foreigner).” For example, in “Lugalbanda and the Anzu bird” lines 324-324, Lugalbanda is described using the metaphor of “a foreign (girš) dog trying to join a pack of dogs” and “a foreign (girš) wild ass trying to join a heard of wild asses.” “Traveler” would not make sense here. For an edition of this text, see Wilcke, Das Lugalbandaespos, 90-129. For an electronic edition of this text, see “Lugalbanda and the Anzu bird” lines 324-325 (ETCSL no. 1.8.2.2) http://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk/cgi-bin/etcsl.cgi?text=c.1.8.2.2&display=Crit&charenc=gcirc#. However, in other contexts, “traveler” (in a general sense) would also fit. In “The Lamentation over the Destruction of Ur” line 308, Ningal mourns, “I am sitting with head raised (as if) a girš in a foreign (kur) city.” For an edition of this text, see Römer, Die Klage über die Zerstörung von Ur, 10-105. For an electronic edition of this text, see “The lament for Urim” line 308 (ETCSL no. 2.2.2) http://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk/cgi-bin/etcsl.cgi?text=c.2.2.2&display=Crit&charenc=gcirc#. In “The Lamentation over the Destruction of Sumer and Ur” lines 375-376, “In order to go (as) a girš from her city to a foreign (kur) place, Ningal quickly clothed herself and left the city.” For a transliteration and translation of this text, see Michalowski, The Lamentation over the Destruction of Sumer and Ur, 36-69. Alternatively, see “The lament for Sumer and Urim” lines 375-376 (ETCSL no. 2.2.3) http://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk/cgi-bin/etcsl.cgi?text=c.2.2.3&display=Crit&charenc=gcirc#. In Collection 13.57 of the Sumerian Proverbs, “They treated a girš badly.” For an edition of this text, see Bendt
the dead, *girs* is better translated “traveler” because it refers to the deceased, who is journeying to the netherworld. In “Gilgameš, Enkidu, and the Netherworld,” lines 185-186, and 206-207, Gilgameš warns Enkidu, “You should not put on your clean garments: they would immediately recognize that you are a *girs*.” Enkidu, however, disregards this warning in lines 206-207: “He put on his clean garments and they recognized that he was a *girs*.” D. Katz points out that dressing in a clean garment and being anointed with oil (see “Gilgameš, Enkidu, and the Netherworld” lines 185-188 and 207-210) is part of the preparation of a corpse. Note also that providing a clean garment and oil is one of the things that the young woman says she will do for the *girs*, who is dead. Thus, the translation of “traveler” for *girs* makes better sense for describing the individual in this movement toward the netherworld. Furthermore, this crossing from the world of the living to the world of the dead is portrayed in literary texts in bleak terms: “the journey [to the Netherworld] is a desolate path.” This suggests that a transition of some sort is taking place.

But what causes this transition from the realm of the living to the netherworld to take place? D. Katz suggests that a ritual to allow the spirit of the deceased to rest in the netherworld can be found in two Sumerian texts from the Old Babylonian period, “La passion du dieu Lillu,” and “The *GIR* and the ki-sikil.” According to the texts, the

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569 BM 24975 line 34. For an edition of this text, see Kramer, "The GIRs and the ki-sikil: A New Sumerian Elegy," 140-142.
570 “Ur-Namma A” line 73. For an edition of this text, see Flückiger-Hawker, 101-142. Alternatively, see “The death of Ur-Namma (Ur-Namma A)” (ETCSL no. 2.4.1.1)
571 AO 3023. For an edition of this text, see F. Thureau-Dangin, "La passion du dieu Lillu," RA 19 (1922): 177-185.
572 BM 24975. For an edition of this text, see Kramer, "The GIRs and the ki-sikil: A New Sumerian Elegy," 139-142.
corpse was placed on a chair and dressed in a garment, anointed, and given offerings of bread and water.\textsuperscript{573} BM 24975 lines 42-47 read:\textsuperscript{574}

\begin{quote}
Bread is placed, and the body is wiped(?).\textsuperscript{575}
From a \textit{maltum}-bowl which is not contaminated(?),\textsuperscript{576}
from a bowl whose rim is not defiled,\textsuperscript{577}
water is poured out and drunk by the ground.
With my fine oil, I anointed (his) body (corpse) for him.
\end{quote}


\textsuperscript{574} The verb \textit{šu—gur} is obscure here. M. Civil suggests three possible definitions: 1) “to roll up, wrap around” 2) “to pick grapes” and 3) “to wipe/ clean the body with bread (magical rite).” See Miguel Civil, "The Lexicon as a Source of Literary Inspiration," in \textit{Language, Literature, and History: Philological and Historical Studies Presented to Erica Reiner}, ed. Francesca Rochberg-Halton (New Haven: American Oriental Society, 1987), 51-54. The second definition does not fit the context; the other two are otherwise attested only in 1\textsuperscript{st} millennium texts, which may not be valid definitions in the Old Babylonian period. Civil notes that two versions of a literary text, N 3512 + N 6322 and CBS 15163, use this verb, and admits that none of his three suggested definitions fit that context either; he suggests that it perhaps could mean “gathered” in his text. See Civil, "The Lexicon as a Source of Literary Inspiration," 41, 54. Whatever this verb means, however, it is clearly intended to refer to food and drink offerings for the dead. Compare Proverbs Collection 1.38:

\begin{quote}
\textit{ninda i3-sig10 šu nu-un-gur}
\textit{a ib2-ta-de2 ki-in-du ba-ab-nag̃}
\end{quote}

with BM 24975 lines 42 and 45:

\begin{quote}
\textit{ninda i3-sig10 šu bi2-ib-gur}
\textit{a ib2-ta-de2 ki-in-de2 ba-ab-nag̃}
\end{quote}

The main difference between the two texts is the negation in the first line of the proverb. The rest of the proverb, however, reads “In the netherworld, its strong place, (since) it is water and food (lit. plants), it is called a water libation.” (For an edition of this text, see Alster, \textit{Proverbs of Ancient Sumer: The World's Earliest Proverb Collections}, 13.

\textsuperscript{575} The verb \textit{al—du8} does not appear to be attested elsewhere. Based on the context, Kramer suggests “contaminated,” to be in parallel with line 44. See Kramer, "The GIR\textsubscript{5} and the ki-sikil: A New Sumerian Elegy," 142 n. 34.

\textsuperscript{577} To mean “defile,” the verb should be \textit{šu—pel-la2}. Here, there is only \textit{pel-la}. It is possible that the \textit{šu} was omitted due to haplography because of the previous word, \textit{šu-um-du-um-bi}, “its rim.”
I clothed (him) (in his) chair in my new garment.

In both texts, Katz argues that the ritual was performed on the image of the dead person rather than the corpse. Katz also believes that such a figure would embody the dead person, and as such could receive offerings or other rites in lieu of the corpse itself.\(^{578}\) Katz suggests that the unknown word si-lā-ah in line 56 of the “Lillu” text (with variant si-im-lā-ah in line 57 of the same text) must be related to the Elamite word si-i-lā, meaning “statue.”\(^{579}\) She argues this based on the similarity to “The GIRs and the ki-sikil” (BM 24975), which refers to anointing the e₂-gars in line 46. Here, she argues that e₂-gars means “shape” or “figure” (Akkadian lānu) rather than “wall” (Akkadian igāru), and must refer to a figurine rather than a corpse.\(^{580}\) Her argument that the ritual is performed on an image is a bit circular, however, since in her discussion of the word e₂-gars, she references the “Lillu” text. Furthermore, the equation of e₂-gars with lānu is based on evidence from the first millennium lexical tradition,\(^{581}\) which may not necessarily be valid for the Old Babylonian period. It is possible, though, that it can mean “form,” in the sense of body. In the text “Ninurta’s Exploits,” Ninurta curses the u-stone in line 423, “You are a strong young man having surpassing e₂-gars; may your form (alan) be diminished.”\(^{582}\) Note that in this line, e₂-gars appears in parallel to alan. Here, alan has to mean “form” rather than “statue,” since the u-stone having a statue does not make sense in this context. Since the curse on the u-stone is that its form (alan) would be diminished in contrast to its surpassing e₂-gars, “form” in the sense of “body” fits the context here. However, regardless of whether the actual corpse or a figure of the dead person was in mind here, the use of dress in this ritual to change the identity of the individual from “living” to “dead” and incorporate him or her into the world of the dead is of interest here.

Some of these elements—the chair and the offerings of food and drink—are also found in the rituals performed for the cult of the dead on a regular basis. These, however, are not the same as the rituals performed during the preparation of the body and burial, and do not appear to affect an individual’s identity. A mention of a gš gu-za gidim (chair for ghosts) appears in the lexical text OB Nippur Ura 01 line 186a.\(^{583}\) Its specific

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580 Ibid.: 111 n. 15.
581 For references, see CAD L p. 78.
583 See http://oracc.museum.upenn.edu/dcilt/Q000039. Admittedly, the majority of evidence for a chair used for ghosts comes from other time periods. A chair is used in the funerary cult during the Ur III period. See Sallaberger, 147. One text from Mari, Mari 12803 lines 7 and 10, refers to royal funerary offerings to be brought in the “house of the thrones” (e₂ gš gu-za). See Maurice Birot, "Fragment de rituel de Mari relatif au kispum,” in Death in Mesopotamia, ed. Bendt Alster (Copenhagen: Akademisk Forlag, 1980), 139-143. Van der Toorn also mentions a 1st millennium kispum ritual in which a chair is set up “for his family ghosts” (ana etemmē kimtišu). See van der Toorn, Family Religion in Babylonia, Syria, and Israel, 52.
function is not mentioned. The *kispum* (Sumerian *ki-sig10-ga*) and other related rituals for the care and feeding of the ancestors involved the provision of food and drink on a regular basis. In the Old Babylonian period, the *kispum* involved the daily offering of food and drink to the deceased family members. Even family members who are presumed to be dead receive regular funerary offerings. King Hammurabi writes the following to Sin-iddinam: “Sin-uselli...has brought the following to my attention, saying, ‘My son Sukkukum disappeared from me eight years ago and I did not know whether he was still alive, and I kept making funerary offerings for him, as if he were dead.’”

Regular funerary offerings are mentioned in the literary texts as well. In the text “Gilgameš, Enkidu, and the Netherworld,” the fate of one who does not receive regular funerary offerings is to eat scraps and crumbs tossed into the street.

The *kispum* did not necessarily involve flour and water; it could involve a bone or beer. At the end of the month, when the moon was not visible, more elaborate meals may have been provided, such as garlic, onions, and fish. The celebration at this time of the year is attested from the 3rd millennium through the 1st millennium in Mesopotamia. It is possible that there was an even more elaborate meal once a year during the month of Abu. Both letters and administrative documents confirm this. In the letters, two kings send requests for special provisions for this time. Ammi-ditana requests milk and ghee, and suggests that 30 cows and 60 quarts of ghee should be sent, so that enough milk would be available throughout the funerary rituals (Akkadian *kispum*; Sumerian *ki-sig10-ga*) during the month of Abu. Samsu-ditana requests two types of turtles for funerary offerings (Sumerian *ba-al-gi = Akkadian raqqu* and Sumerian *nig₂-bun₂-na = Akkadian šeleppû*). The administrative documents mention a 1-year old calf, a female sheep, cattle, and grain.

These regular offerings of food and drink, however, seem to perform two functions: on the one hand, they keep the dead as a part of the community. On the other hand, it also keeps them from returning as troublesome ghosts. In either, case, though,

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584 See van der Toorn, *Family Religion in Babylonia, Syria, and Israel*, 49.
585 AbB 13 21 lines 3-9
586 Line 278k-l. For an edition of this text, see Gadotti, 282-319. For an electronic edition of this text, see “Gilgameš, Enkidu, and the nether world” version from Urim (Segment B) lines 6-7 (ETCSL no. 1.8.1.4) http://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk/cgi-bin/etcsl.cgi?text=c.1.8.1.4&display=Crit&charenc=geirc#.
587 See AbB 6 5 lines 1-5 (of the case).
588 See AbB 8 88 lines 2’-8’.
589 AbB 1 106: 4-19. See also Tsukimoto, 47.
590 See van der Toorn, *Family Religion in Babylonia, Syria, and Israel*, 50.
591 See AbB 14 7:5-7
592 See AbB 6 51: 4-6. For the most complete discussion of various turtles, see Jeremiah Peterson, “A Study of Sumerian Faunal Conception with a Focus on the Terms Pertaining to the Order *Testudines*” (PhD diss., University of Pennsylvania, 2007).
593 See CT 48 100:1-3.
594 See JCS 11, 37, 27 5-14.
595 See BA 5 511 (no. 46).
596 See TLB 1 92:32-38.
feeding the dead does not change their identity. The prayer to the moon god Sin (mentioned earlier in this section) makes it clear that the deceased can come back for regular offerings of food and drink: “Release the family of Sin-nāṣir, the son of Ipqu-Anunnîtu, that they may eat his bread and drink his water.”

One text calls on numerous ancestors and various groups of deceased people to come, eat and drink, and bless the king, Ammi-ṣaduqa. The dead who do not get funerary offerings can come back as troublesome ghosts that can cause illness. One incantation to Utu lists various types of spirits that can cause illness. The incantation goes on to state that after Ningišzida and Biti have seized the spirit and caused it to enter the netherworld (lines 237-241), “May the sick man praise your (Utu’s) greatness (because of) his life” (line 244). Ghosts or demons that caused illness could be placated by the provision of kispum. One ritual text from the Isin-Larsa period (IM 10135 line 3) refers to the “kispum of the steppe” (ki-si-gi0-ga edin-na). Tsukimoto suggests that this is a “funerary offering” at the “burial” of the ghost or demon that caused the illness, using imitative magic. If, then, food and drink provided on a regular basis are used both to keep the dead as a part of a community and to keep them from coming back to cause illness, then it suggests that it is not the regular offerings of food and drink that gives them their new identity.

But how do we know that dress was involved in this change of identity from the realm of the living to the realm of the dead? As noted, Katz identified several elements in the preparation of the corpse: being placed on a chair, dressed in a garment, anointed, and given offerings of bread and water. I argue that it is these elements, which are part of

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597 BE 6/2 111 lines 4-5 and 34-36. For a transliteration and translation of this text, see Wilcke, "Nachlese zu A. Poften's Babylonian Legal and Business Documents from the Time of the First Dynasty of Babylon Chiefly from Nippur (BE 6/2) Teil 1," 51-54.
599 CBS 563 lines 170-217. For an edition of this text, see Bendt Alster, "Incantation to Utu," ASJ 13 (1991): 37-79. Much of the list of spirits is broken. Line 170 refers to “a spirit roaming about in the netherworld.” Lines 171-183, which are mostly broken, all of which state, (If) it is a spirit who has no… Lines 184-191 and 193-213 are also mostly broken: “(If) it is a…” Line 192, which is also broken, reads, “(If) it is a…, (if) it is an evil spirit, (if) it is a …” Line 214 mentions “…the evil…the evil god, the evil Lamaštu.” While the broken lines cannot be restored with absolute certainty, two Kassite versions of this incantation, TCL 16 79 and CBS 1686 + 1533, refer to “the spirit who has nobody to take care of him” (line 218) and “the spirit who has no one to pour water for him” (line 221), along with other spirits who have no relatives to take care of them. For editions of these text, see Alster, "Incantation to Utu," 37-79. Note that M. Geller has a different interpretation of this hymn. He suggests that the individual in the incantation has been falsely accused by various ghosts in front of Utu, and are causing him problems; thus, this text is a plea to Utu to correct this situation. See Markham J. Geller, "Very Different Utu Incantations," ASJ 17 (1995): 197.
601 See Tsukimoto, 143-145.
the rituals for the preparation of a body and burial, which bring about the change in identity. In addition to reflecting the idea of performance, these elements of ritual also reflect the idea of formalism, a limited set of actions. The literary texts refer to these funerary offerings. For example, in “Inana’s Descent” lines 86-89, when asked about her reason for coming to the netherworld, her excuse is that she is going to observe the funerary offerings for the husband of her sister Ereškigal. One text, CT 45 99, lists various objects and items of food. These are believed to be provisions for the dead on

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602 It is clear that the preparation of the body for burial and burial are involved in this movement from the realm of the living to the realm of the dead. In the text “Gilgameš, Enkidu, and the Netherworld,” Gilgameš asks Enkidu about the fate of various categories of people. Lines 278z-zz read: “Did you see the one who was set on fire?” ‘I did not see him. His ghost is not there; his smoke went up to the sky.’” For a transliteration and translation of this text, see Gadotti, 282-319. B. Alster, argues that because the body was burnt, even the person’s ghost was destroyed, which made it impossible for that person to be there in the netherworld. See Alster, Wisdom of Ancient Sumer, 340. T. Abusch is even more explicit: “According to one Mesopotamian belief, burning the body makes it impossible to give the dead person proper burial rites, with the consequence that is ghost cannot go to the netherworld.” See Tzvi Abusch, "The Socio-Religious Framework of Maqlû, Part I," in Riches Hidden in Secret Places: Ancient Near Eastern Studies in Memory of Thorkild Jacobsen, ed. Tzvi Abusch (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2002), 13. This would explain the fear of not receiving a proper burial. For example, one Sumerian proverb, UET 6/2 299, reads: “A man who does not worship his god is thrown into the desert; his body is not buried; his heir does not give his ghost water to drink through the libation pipe.” For an edition of this text, see Alster, Proverbs of Ancient Sumer: The World’s Earliest Proverb Collections, 316. S. Richardson has studied this fear by examining corpse abandonment and abuse. See Seth Richardson, "Death and Dismemberment in Mesopotamia: Discorporation between the Body and Body Politic," in Performing Death: Social Analyses of Funerary Traditions in the Ancient Near East and Mediterranean, ed. Nicola Laneri (Chicago: The Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago, 2007), 189-208. This fear of not receiving a proper burial may also be reflected in the fear of having one’s grave desecrated. There are approximately 5 or 6 so-called “funerary texts” dated to either the Old Babylonian or the Middle Babylonian period, which express good wishes for someone who does not violate a tomb. One of the wishes is “May his spirit (eṭemmû) drink pure water below” (ina šaplatî eṭemmûṣu mē zakūtî lîlu). For an edition of these texts, see Jean Bottéro, "Les inscriptions cunéiformes funéraires,” in La mort, les morts dans les sociétés anciennes, ed. Gherardo Gnilo and Jean-Pierre Vernant (Cambridge and Paris: Cambridge University Press and Editions de la Maison des Sciences de l'Homme, 1982), 388-399.

603 For an edition of this text, see Sladek, 103-181. For an electronic edition of this text, see “Inana’s descent to the nether world” lines 86-89 (ETCSL no. 1.4.1) http://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk/cgi-bin/etcsli.cgi?text=c.1.4.1&display=Crit&charenc=gcirc.

the way to the netherworld and gifts. While limited, archaeological evidence for food and drink offerings associated with burials does exist. During the Old Babylonian period at Ur, even the poorest graves contained, at a minimum, a drinking cup, a bottle for water, and a plate for food. The corpses held the drinking bowls near their mouths, which suggests the provision of water for the deceased. Individual graves also show evidence of what appears to be food offerings. Grave LG/126 had a bowl that contained vegetable matter. Grave LG/136 had a saucer with the bones of a small bird or animal. Several graves (LG/107, LG/146, LG/150, LG/189, LG/193) contained dates or traces of dates. At Tell ed-Dér, burials included containers whose opening was covered with a small plate, bowl, or potsherd, as if to protect the contents. Since no traces of food were found in an analysis of the residues in the containers, it is believed that these containers held water (if only symbolically). Food offerings in the grave included cheaper cuts of meat—the legs, pelvis, or rarely the shoulder or skull of various animals (cattle, sheep, goats, pigs, or equids).

Textual evidence demonstrates that items intended for the dead, including dress, were not necessarily the ones used previously by the deceased in everyday life. One Old Babylonian dowry text specifies that of the 4 guz-za-garments that a woman received, 2 were intended "for the grave." Limited archaeological evidence for burial dress exists as well. For example, at Tell ed-Dér, textile remains were found on the skull, on the pelvis, and under the skull, suggesting that the corpse was dressed or at least wrapped for burial. One pin contained the impression of a textile in the oxidation on the pin, suggesting that it was used to hold a piece of clothing or other textile in place. The

606 Woolley and Mallowan, The Old Babylonian Period, 36-38.
607 Ibid., 206.
608 Ibid., 207.
609 Ibid., 204, 208, 212.
611 Ibid., 63-64.
612 BM 16465 column II lines 9-10 For an edition, see Dalley: 69-73. A much earlier text from Presargonic Adab also confirms this. A woman named Lalla receives items of dress and other objects specifically for when she will be in the grave. The same text also lists items of dress and other objects for her husband, who may have been deceased at the time. See Foxvog.
613 The fragments of this plain weave red-brown textile are extremely fine and dense (20 threads/ cm in one direction and 80 threads/ cm in the other). While the fiber is not identifiable, it may be cotton. See Hundt, 136.
614 This plain weave textile, found on the pelvis of the same individual, is not as finely woven as the fragments found on the skull. The thread count is 15 threads/ cm in one direction and 8 threads/cm in the other direction. See Ibid.
615 These textile remains, found under the skull of a child, appear to be small balls of brown thread, wound in two directions, perpendicularly to each other. See Ibid., 137.
616 See Gasche, "Le sondage A: l'ensemble I ", 110.
Larsa period burials at Ur also contained evidence of textiles, as did the burials at Nippur. Other items of dress associated with burials included bracelets, rings, pectorals, bands, and pins made of various metals including tin, copper, bronze, and silver. Beads made of bone, glass, metals such as bronze, or other materials were also found. Cylinder seals, which could have been used by the deceased in life, are not usually clearly attested in burial contexts during the Old Babylonian period. Many cylinder seals from this period have no clear archaeological context because they were purchased rather than coming from archaeological excavations. The seals that do come from excavations tend to come from contexts other than burials. There are a few

617 A child’s body in LG/39 was covered in a linen garment, then draped with a woolen cloth. See Woolley and Mallowan, *The Old Babylonian Period*, 198. Another body in LG/120 was also draped in linen and then covered with another cloth. See Woolley and Mallowan, *The Old Babylonian Period*, 205. Traces of cloth were found with the bodies in LG/95, LG/108, LG/118 and LG/173. See Woolley and Mallowan, *The Old Babylonian Period*, 203-205, 210. A few bodies were also wrapped in matting or had matting placed under them (LG/100; LG/116; LG/142). See Woolley and Mallowan, *The Old Babylonian Period*, 203, 205, 208. Some bodies were both laid on a mat and wrapped in cloth (LG/128). See Woolley and Mallowan, *The Old Babylonian Period*, 206.

618 Graves 1B 299, 3B 67, 3B 68, 3B 69, 3B 70, 3B 72, 3B 73, 3B 74, and 3B 92 were lined with matting. See McCown, Haines, and Hansen, 140, 143-144.


620 See Gasche, "Le sondage A: l'ensemble I ", 110-115; McCown, Haines, and Hansen, 120-144.

621 Cylinder seals occasionally do appear in burials in earlier periods, although the majority of them are found in other contexts. In the Diyala region, a cylinder seal was found in Grave 89, which is dated to the ED II period. See Henri Frankfort, *Stratified Cylinder Seals from the Diyala Region*, OIP 72 (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1955), Plate 29. Other seals were found in Graves 126, 131, 144, 150, 156, 158, 167, and 168 from the ED III period. See Frankfort, *Stratified Cylinder Seals from the Diyala Region*, Plates 31-36. The best-known cylinder seals associated with burials come from the ED royal cemetery at Ur. See, for example, Holly Pittman, "Cylinder Seals," in *Treasures from the Royal Tombs of Ur*, ed. Richard L. Zettler and Lee Horne (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, 1998).

cylinder seals associated with graves from the Larsa period at Ur. It is not clear, however, that the deceased used these cylinder seals during their lifetime. One cylinder seal was clearly unfinished. Other “cylinder seals” were unpierced, suggesting that they were tags or labels, rather than actual seals. Furthermore, the style or subject matter of some seals, along with the worn condition of other seals, suggests that the deceased was not necessarily the original owner. It is unclear why these seals were included in the graves, rather than being reused. Unlike other items of dress used in bringing about a change of identity in the life cycle (e.g. birth), these items of dress were permanent; new items of dress were not provided. This is to be expected, since the

Allen, OIC 20 (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1936), 85-90. In the rest of the Diyala region, while cylinder seals dating to the Old Babylonian period were found, none of them were from burials. See Frankfort, Stratified Cylinder Seals from the Diyala Region, Plates 85-89. At Tell ed-Dēr, no cylinder seals were found in burial contexts. See Gasche and Burger-Heinrich, "Les données," 46-60. The few cylinder seals that were found were in other contexts. See H. Bussers, "Glyptique de Tell ed-Dēr," in Tell ed-Dēr II. Progress Reports (First Series) (Leuven: Peeters, 1978), 138-144. At Nippur, no cylinder seals were associated with burials during the Isin-Larsa or Old Babylonian periods. The graves include 1B 276, 1B 282, 1B 283, 1B 284, 1B 285, 1B 286, 1B 287, 1B 288, 1B 289, 1B 29091, 1B 292, 1B 295097, 1B 299, 1B 300, 1B 301, 1B 302, 1B 305, and 3B 13A-B from area TA and 3B 67, 3B 68, 3B 69, 3B 70, 3B 71, 3B 72, 3B 73, 3B 74, 3B 75, and 3B 92 from area TB. See McCown, Haines, and Hansen, 120-144. It must be noted, however, that there were only a few graves excavated in domestic contexts; the majority were likely interred in cemeteries. See Stone, Nippur Neighborhoods, 41.

623 U.16550 from LG/5; U.17099 from LG/20; U.17329 from LG/27; U.16709 from LG/33; U.16806 from LG/51; U.16819 from LG/89; U.7909 from LG/99; U.7522 from LG/102; U.7528 from LG/107; U.10407 from LG/114; U.6200 from LG/148; U.6255 from LG/153; U.16262 from LG/164. See Woolley and Mallowan, The Old Babylonian Period, 195-197, 199, 202-204, 208-209. One seal (U.6105) is listed as coming from LG/137 in the field notes, but LG/141 in the catalog. See Woolley and Mallowan, The Old Babylonian Period, 207, 221. In either case, it was found in a burial. Some cylinder seals, however, were found close to burials rather than in the burials themselves. One (U.16810) was found in the door-filling outside LG/41. See Woolley and Mallowan, The Old Babylonian Period, 198. Two cylinder seals (U.7099) were found in a hole outside LG/133. See Woolley and Mallowan, The Old Babylonian Period, 206. Others were found outside the graves, such as U.7589 (outside LG/97); U.6091 (outside LG/140). See Woolley and Mallowan, The Old Babylonian Period, 203, 207.

624 Found in LG/38. See Woolley and Mallowan, The Old Babylonian Period, 198.


626 Woolley and Mallowan, The Old Babylonian Period, 171.

627 There is some textual evidence from the much earlier Early Dynastic Lagaš. One text, VS 14, 163 lists different garments for the statues of the deceased ancestors (tug2 gidim)-
new identity of the deceased, as being among the dead, is also permanent; no further changes in identity would be possible.

The common element that is found in life-cycle rituals that bring about a change of identity in Old Babylonian Mesopotamia, then, is dress. In birth rituals, gendered items of dress (a weapon and an ax for a male and a spindle and a hair clasp for a female) are used to establish the gender of the newborn. In burial rituals, the deceased are dressed in garments of some sort, which changes their identity from “living” to “dead.” This dress used in ritual contexts is intended specifically for the purpose of the ritual and is not typical, every-day dress; with the exception of burial rituals, this dress is also temporary.

e-ne-kam; see reverse column 2 line 1) of the ruling family (Urukagina). See Wolfgang Heimpel, "Das Untere Meer," ZA 77 (1987): 72-73; Philippe Talon, "A propos d'une graphie prèscargonique de SL 577 (Gidim)," RA 68 (1974): 167-178. However, providing clothing for the statues of the deceased ancestors is not the same as providing clothing for the corpse itself. There is no evidence, however, for the continued provision of clothing for the dead (or their statues) during the Old Babylonian period.
CONCLUSION

In spite of the social and economic importance of dress in ancient Mesopotamian, previous studies have focused on either archaeological remains or pictorial representations of dress only; most textual studies have concentrated on textile terminology, attempting to equate these terms with actual physical objects. Anthropological studies on dress have increased in recent years; however, these theories on dress have not yet been systematically applied to ancient Mesopotamian cuneiform texts written in Sumerian and Akkadian. This is surprising, given that the rich and varied cuneiform textual tradition provides a unique perspective on these cultural phenomena. Since dress communicates something about the user’s identity, and thus can be used to construct or alter identity, studying dress provides an extraordinary opportunity to investigate this aspect of society, which might not otherwise be accessible directly.

Most people outside the field of dress studies have usually equated dress with “clothing”; however, this study uses a broader definition of dress developed by M. Roach-Higgins and J. Eicher, who defined dress as “an assemblage of modifications of the body and/or supplements to the body”. This includes but is not limited to hairstyles, tattoos or other skin colorations, body piercings, garments, jewelry, weapons, and other accessories. Such a definition of dress expands the focus beyond clothing to body modifications or other items that are added to the body, which could otherwise be overlooked or ignored. The two sub-types of dress, body modifications and body supplements, are distinguished based on their relation to the body, whether the body itself is altered, or something is added to the body. These sub-types of dress can be further classified according to their physical attributes (color, volume and proportion, shape and structure, surface design, texture, odor, sound, taste) and their permanence (permanent, semi-permanent, temporary).

Three different approaches to dress were described. First, there is the semiotic approach. In this approach, an item of dress functions as a symbol, representing not the item of dress itself, but an abstract idea or concept. Since a great deal of the evidence for dress in Mesopotamia is written, not material, and because texts are written using signs or symbols, the semiotic approach seems particularly apt for a text-based corpus, which is probably why this approach has been favored by scholars of ancient Mesopotamia. While this approach can yield valuable results, it is too narrow to cover all possible understandings of the use of dress in ancient Mesopotamian texts.

The second approach looks at dress as a material object. The focus is on the item of dress itself, and its ability to communicate aspects of identity. The third approach, the use of dress in the active construction of identity, emphasizes the surface of the body, and looks at the body as a medium on which identity can be constructed using dress. It builds off of the second approach in that it requires understanding what aspects of identity an item of dress is communicating, in order to understand how the individual is using dress to actively construct identity. While an individual’s identity may be based on certain givens (e.g. biological sex, familial affiliation, etc.), dress can be used to construct an identity that may reflect this identity in full, highlight certain aspects of this identity only, or even alter this identity.

\[628\] Roach-Higgins and Eicher, 7.
This study started with a philological analysis of items of dress that appear in texts to discern what aspects of identity are expressed through the item (dress as material object approach) in order to examine what identity the individual is constructing (or having constructed for him or her) by the use of various items of dress (dress used in the active construction of identity approach). Since dress plays an important role in a wide variety of texts (from legal to administrative to epistolary) throughout all of Mesopotamian history, it would have been beyond the scope of this study to examine every text in which dress appears. The purpose of this study was to apply these methods to a selected group of texts from the Old Babylonian period, to demonstrate both the use and the usefulness of these methods in reading ancient Mesopotamian texts. This study examined selected texts in three different contexts: literary, legal, and ritual.

For the literary texts, this study focused on the Sumerian composition, “Inana’s Descent to the Netherworld.” In this text, Inana, the Mesopotamian goddess of war and sex, puts on several items of dress in preparation for her visit to the Netherworld, ostensibly for the funeral of her sister’s husband. She gives instructions to her vizier, Ninsūbar, for obtaining help in case her plans go awry. Her sister, Ereshkigal, the queen of the Netherworld, tricks Inana into removing one item of dress at each of the seven gates of the netherworld, so that she arrives there naked. Inana succeeds in seizing Ereshkigal’s throne, but is judged and killed for her actions. Ninsūbar, Inana’s vizier, enlists the help of Enki, the god of wisdom and magic, to rescue Inana. Enki makes and sends two creatures down to the Netherworld, who trick Ereshkigal into giving them Inana’s corpse, which they subsequently bring back to life. Inana is allowed to leave, on the condition that she provides a substitute for herself. She refuses to give over Ninsūbar and two other deities who are mourning her absence from the earth, but hands over her husband, Dumuzi, who has not been mourning her.

Inana’s dress plays a key role in the manipulation of her identity. An examination of Inana’s various items of dress reveals that these express her identity as a high-ranking goddess of queenly status, along with her identity as a goddess of sex and war (the dress as material object approach); thus, in putting on these items of dress, Inana is actively portraying her identity in all its fullness, with the exception of her incarnation as Venus (the use of dress in the active construction of identity). Inana’s intention is to push the boundaries of her identity by attempting to usurp Ereshkigal’s place as the queen of the Netherworld. Since she is clearly not wearing mourning, it is obvious that she has lied about her intention to attend the funeral of her brother-in-law. Ereshkigal is worried that Inana may succeed in her attempt to become the queen of the Netherworld, so she tricks Inana into removing one item of dress at each of the seven gates of the Netherworld, so that she arrives there naked, and without her identity (as a queen and as the goddess of war and sex). Without this identity, Inana’s actions in attempting to make herself queen of the Netherworld are inappropriate; as a result, she is judged and left as a lifeless corpse, without her previous identity. This also explains why Enlil and Nanna refuse to help her—she has transgressed the boundaries of her identity. Finally, when Inana must hand over a substitute for herself in order to leave the Netherworld, she hands over her lover, Dumuzi, who alone has failed to dress in such a way as to assume the identity of a mourner.

For legal contexts, this study focused on one item of dress, the hem of the garment, in legal texts, mostly from Old Babylonian Sippar. This study first examined
the use of the hem in lieu of a cylinder seal to seal a legal document, in order to
demonstrate that the hem of the garment can be used to express an individual’s legal
identity (dress as material object approach). The hem is not merely a personality symbol
that can stand in place of the person; rather, it is functionally equivalent to a cylinder seal
in confirming the legal identity of the individual involved in the matter, whether as a
party or as a witness to the transaction, which carries with it both rights and obligations.
Since the hem of the garment can be used to express an individual’s legal identity, this
study then argued that it could be used in marriage and divorce to bring about a change in
identity. In marriage, the terhatum (“bridewealth”) was tied in the hem of the bride’s
garment at one stage in the marriage process. This transferred the bride from her family
of origin to her husband’s family, giving her both a new familial identity and an identity
as “wife.” At the same time, it gave her future children the identity as members of her
husband’s family. Cutting the hem in the case of divorce reversed this process of
marriage, transferring the woman out of her husband’s family and causing her to lose her
identity as “wife.” These changes in identity had important implications for inheritance,
support, and the disposition of the marital property.

For ritual contexts, this study focused on the use of dress in bringing about a
change of identity during two rites of passage in the life cycle—at birth and at death.
Rites of passage are types of rituals in which an individual or a group moves from one
place in the social order to another. Although rituals may be characterized by several
different features, the most important characteristic of a rite of passage is performance.
Performance is used to model, and thus shape, people’s experience and understanding of
the world. In other words, it is the community’s recognition of this change in identity or
acceptance into a certain social group through the performance of ritual that shapes the
new social reality. The dress that is used in ritual contexts is not ordinary, everyday
dress, but rather dress that is used for the particular purpose of bringing about this change
in identity.

In the Old Babylonian period, fetuses and newborns were in many ways
considered to be unformed beings whose identity needed to be shaped and molded. One
important aspect of identity is gender. In the birth incantations, various items of dress are
put in the newborn’s hand. These hand-held objects are considered dress, in that they are
additions to the body. The biological male baby gets a weapon and an ax, while the
biological female baby gets a spindle and a hair clasp. These items of dress, as material
objects, clearly communicate one important aspect of identity: gender. As such, these
items of dress can be used to actively construct the newborn’s gender identity.

At death, dress is used as part of the ritual process to move the individual from
being a member of the community to being among the dead. Basic aspects of the
individual’s identity, such as his or her name and familial affiliation, are retained.

The dress used in these ritual contexts is not normal, everyday dress. Babies do
not normally carry gendered objects, such as weapons and axes or spindles and hair
clasps. The deceased get items of dress that are intended specifically for the grave. This
atypical dress is used to bring about the change in identity. In the case of newborns, this
temporary dress is used to bring together the real world, in which a newborn lacks
gender, with the imagined world, in which a newborn will take on idealized gender roles,
in order to begin the process of establishing the newborn’s gender identity, which will
continue to be developed through socialization. In the case of the dead, this atypical
dress is used to bring about a permanent change in identity: moving the individual from being a living member of the community to being among the dead.

Thus, this study applied theories of dress to Old Babylonian cuneiform texts in three different contexts: literary, legal, and ritual. The chapter on dress in literary contexts focused on “Inana’s Descent to the Netherworld.” Rather than using a semiotic approach, in which Inana’s items of dress are not objects, but instead represent her powers, this study did a careful philological analysis of each item of dress to discern what aspect of Inana’s identity each was expressing, and argued that Inana was using dress to construct her identity in all its fullness: a goddess of high queenly status, along with her identity as the goddess of war and sex. The chapter on dress in legal contexts focused on the hem of the garment. Instead of using a semiotic approach, in which the hem was not a hem, per se, but rather stood for the person who owned it, this study examined the use of the hem as a seal substitute to show that the hem, like a cylinder seal, was able to express an individual’s legal identity. Because the hem could communicate legal identity, it could be manipulated to construct identity. In the case of marriage, by tying the terhatum in the woman’s hem, it gave the woman a new identity as a member of her husband’s family and as a “wife.” Cutting the hem in case of divorce, then, undid this change, and brought her back to her previous identity. The chapter on ritual contexts focused on the use of dress in bringing about a change in identity through the use of rites of passage at two points in the life cycle: birth and death. At birth, hand-held objects that expressed gender were placed in the hand of the newborn, in order to begin the process of establishing the newborn’s gender identity, beyond its biological sex. At death, dress was part of the ritual process in moving the deceased from being a member of the community to being among the dead.

Thus, looking at dress as a material object which can communicate identity, in order to understand how the individual involved is constructing his or her identity (or having his or her identity constructed) is a valuable way of reading (or re-reading) ancient Mesopotamian cuneiform texts. First, this method of reading texts makes it possible to investigate the idea of identity, which might otherwise not be directly accessible. It appears that in Mesopotamia, identity is not fixed, but can be constructed (or re-constructed) on different occasions, using dress. One’s identity, as constructed through dress, carries with it both rights and responsibilities. Acting out of keeping with one’s identity, as constructed through dress, can cause negative reactions.

Second, this method of reading texts also illuminates aspects of the texts that might be puzzling or else overlooked, if items of dress are treated not as items of dress, per se, but as symbols that represent something else. The present study not only argued for a new understanding of the items of dress that Inana put on, as constructing her identity, rather than standing for her powers, but also challenged the traditional translation of hi-li as “wig,” arguing instead that it is rather an “ornament.”

Third, the study of dress in Mesopotamian texts gives insight into the idea of boundaries. Not only do the items of dress themselves have literal boundaries (e.g. the hem of the garment), but dress can be used to transgress or cross boundaries. For example, in “Inana’s Descent to the Netherworld,” Dumuzi transgressed the boundaries of his identity as Inana’s lover/husband by failing to construct his identity as a mourner by wearing a royal garment and sitting on a throne rather than wearing mourning wear; in
contrast, Inana, having lost her royal identity as constructed through dress was condemned for attempting to sit on the throne of the netherworld.

Fourth, this method forces the modern reader to rethink assumptions, not just about texts but also about aspects of Mesopotamian society. For example, the legal chapter looked at tying the terhatum in the hem of the garment as one stage of marriage to bring about a change in identity for the woman. Since marriage often has ritual aspects as well, it raises some interesting questions. For example, if marriage can also be considered a rite of passage, can we discern the ritual aspects of marriage, as well as the legal? Is it fair to impose the modern assumption that the two can be separated?

Fifth, this is a fruitful method for revealing interconnections that may give us a more complete picture of aspects of society. For example, take Sîn-nāṣir, the scribe from Sippar. The prayer to the moon god that he commissioned (BE 6/2 111) lists five generations of his family. On the one hand, in the legal chapter, it gave evidence that only daughters who are nadiātum of Šamaš and wives (mothers) were considered members of the family; a daughter who married became a member of her husband’s family. On the other hand, in the ritual chapter, it gave evidence for the kispum, the regular offering to the deceased ancestors, and that the dead can come back, keeping them, in some way, as a part of the community. But since Sîn-nāṣir came from a scribal family, studying the family archives can give evidence for sealing, witnessing, and scribal practices. In fact, his son, Ipqu-Aya, copied the “Flood Story” (“Atra-Hasis”) as an apprentice scribe.629

Finally, this method could be fruitfully applied to other texts as well. For example, the Mari letters preserve a correspondence between King Zimrī-Lîm and one of his officials, Mukannišum, about a tadditum-garment that Zimrī-Lîm wanted. Not only does Zimrī-Lîm specify details about the construction of the garment, but he also requires that it be ready before the other kings arrive. This emphasis on the details, including the size of the ruffle on the garment, and the need for it before the other kings arrive, suggest that Zimrī-Lîm intends to wear this garment in order to convey, and thus impress the other kings with his wealth and high status. In the Assyrian New Year’s coronation rituals, dated to the Middle Assyrian period, the officiant places a turban-like garment on the king’s head as part of the ritual. This appears to be intended to create (or re-create) the king in his identity as king, as the accompanying prayer asks that Assur and Ninlil allow this headdress to remain on the king for a hundred years. In Tablet XI of the Gilgameš epic, after Gilgameš has been wandering around after Enkidu’s death, Gilgameš’s body is described as being covered in matted hair, and he is wearing animal skins. Ūta-napištim, the survivor of the flood, has Ur-šanabi, the boatman, clean up Gilgameš and make him wear royal robes instead, befitting a king. Since before Enkidu was “civilized,” while he was running with the wild animals (in Tablet I), his body was also covered in matted hair, it suggests that Gilgameš has lost his kingly identity, and instead has reverted to the wild animal-like status that Enkidu once had; it is not until he is redressed in his royal robes that he resumes his kingly identity.

The present study focused on three different contexts (literary, legal, and ritual) in the Old Babylonian period; nevertheless, this method can be applied usefully to the full spectrum of cuneiform texts in ancient Mesopotamia throughout all time periods.

629 van Koppen, 140-166.
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