



UPPER EGYPT IN NEO-ASSYRIAN OFFICIAL INSCRIPTIONS: A CASE STUDY IN NEO-ASSYRIAN IMPERIAL IDEOLOGY

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ABSTRACT

The Assyrian period of Egyptian history is relatively neglected in the fields of both Egyptology and Assyriology. Moreover, the research that exists tends to narrowly focus on the Egyptian-Kushite side (the Twenty-fifth and Twenty-sixth Dynasties), on Lower Egypt, and on various historical-chronological issues. By contrast, this paper centers on the Assyrian side, on Upper Egypt, and on the ideological perspective in its seeking to describe the portrayal of Upper Egypt in Neo-Assyrian official inscriptions. Three ideological phases of Assyrian contact with Upper Egypt (specifically phases of exploration, conquest, and governing) and ten ideological themes (e.g., Upper Egypt as entrusted to the Assyrian kings, a conquered place, etc.) are identified, classified, and discussed in this case study in Neo-Assyrian imperial ideology.

INTRODUCTION

Egyptological research on the Assyrian period of Egyptian history (c. 670–660 BCE)¹ is relatively modest in scope.² Moreover, previous research has focused primarily on the Kushite Twenty-fifth Dynasty or the Saite Twenty-sixth Dynasty in terms of agents, on Lower Egypt in terms of geography, and on historical and chronological issues at the expense of other aspects.³ Likewise, Assyriological research on the conquest of Egypt is also modest and historically oriented.⁴

In a way, the current state of the field is not surprising. The Assyrian period did not last long, and it is only natural for Egyptologists to focus on the rulers by the Nile. Also, Lower Egypt was significant in that it was the location of the decisive battle between the Kushites and the Assyrians, and

there are numerous historical and chronological problems associated with this period.⁵ This paper contributes to existing research by focusing on the Assyrians as agents, on Upper Egypt with regard to geography, and on the ideological dimension (i.e., what was Upper Egypt's place in the Assyrian worldview), thus shedding light on the image of the Nile valley in Assyrian sources.

AIMS, SOURCES, AND METHODOLOGY

The primary aim of this paper is to discern how Upper Egypt is described in Neo-Assyrian official inscriptions and to situate this portrayal with respect to previous research on Neo-Assyrian imperial ideology.⁶ The secondary aim of this paper is to present and discuss alternative secondary sources from both Egyptian and Assyrian contexts on

Egyptian-Assyrian relations in the Neo-Assyrian period (934–609 BCE) that pertain to Upper Egypt. For the purposes of this paper, “Neo-Assyrian official inscriptions” consist of Neo-Assyrian royal inscriptions, state letters, and documents.⁷ These inscriptions are well preserved, mainly from the state archives of Nineveh, and contain general references to Egypt as well as more specific references to Upper and Lower Egypt. Egypt is mentioned in texts as early as the 9th and 8th centuries BCE, but the most frequent references to Egypt are found in texts dating to the 7th century BCE, that is, when the Neo-Assyrian Empire reached its maximal extent.⁸ As for secondary sources, Assyrian texts (other than Neo-Assyrian official inscriptions), Egyptian texts, Assyrian and Egyptian iconography, and Assyrian material remains in Egypt (and vice versa) are all relevant.⁹

This study was conducted through the survey of texts in the book series *Royal Inscriptions of Mesopotamia, Assyrian Periods* (RIMA),¹⁰ *Royal Inscriptions of the Neo-Assyrian Period* (RINAP),¹¹ and *State Archives of Assyria* (SAA), as well as from searches (using strategic search words)¹² in their respective online databases RIAo,¹³ RINAPo,¹⁴ and SAAo.¹⁵ Text passages and their textual contexts were extracted in search for ideological patterns apropos of the conception of Upper Egypt in Neo-Assyrian official inscriptions. Ideological themes are then identified, classified, and discussed. Basic philological methods, in which linguistic aspects such as semantics, morphology, and syntax are crucial elements, are employed throughout the textual analysis. In the analysis of visual and material evidence, informative aspects of iconography and material culture, such as perspective, proportion, and archaeological context, are considered.

A basic presumption of this study is that the toponym terms *Uriššu* and *Paturisu* refer to Upper Egypt, as is generally suggested.¹⁶ There are at least two strong arguments for this equation. Firstly, *Paturisu* can be identified with the Egyptian toponym term *p³-t³-r^{sy}*, meaning “the southern land” (in contrast to “the northern land,” *t³ m^hw*, which includes the Delta and the city of Memphis). *Uriššu* should then be a shortened form (excluding the elements *p³-t³-*) of this term.¹⁷ Secondly, *Paturisu* is, in the texts of Esarhaddon (presented and discussed below), mentioned alongside *Mušur* and *Kusu*, indicating that three successive regions (from north to south) are spoken of, namely Lower Egypt, Upper

Egypt, and Kush, thus corresponding with the well-established notion that Egypt was a double kingdom. At least when *Mušur* occurs along with *Paturisu* in the texts, it refers just to Lower Egypt.¹⁸ Secondly, biblical evidence indicates that *Paturisu*, in the form of *Patrôš* (Pathros) or *Patrusîm*, refers to the Nile Valley, that is, to Upper Egypt.¹⁹ The toponym term *Kusu* (or *Kûsu*) doubtlessly refers to Kush, that is, to the land situated south of the first cataract.²⁰

HISTORICAL AND IDEOLOGICAL BACKGROUNDS

The interaction between Egypt and Assyria in the Neo-Assyrian period alternates between war and peace.²¹ Egyptian(?) troops aid a Levantine coalition against Assyria under Shalmaneser III (858–824 BCE), while the “black obelisk” of the same ruler depicts Egyptian(?) tribute. In the reign of Tiglath-pileser III (744–727 BCE), the Neo-Assyrian Empire borders on Egypt. Under Sargon II (721–705 BCE), a “king of Egypt” sends tribute to Assyria, and the Assyrian king states that he encouraged trade between Egypt and Assyria. Tensions existed as well. An Egyptian general with the name Re’e incites rebellion in the Levant, before the Assyrian king succeeds in pacifying him. Sargon II also claims that the king of Kush first harbored and then extradited an Assyrian enemy. Under Sennacherib (704–681 BCE), Egyptian and Kushite forces join an anti-Assyrian, Levantine coalition at Eltekeh in Philistia.²²

After an initial, unsuccessful attempt in 674 BCE, Esarhaddon (680–669 BCE) manages to conquer (at least) the Delta in 671 BCE. Delta rulers, encouraged by Kush, soon decide to throw off the Assyrian yoke. Esarhaddon makes an attempt to recapture Egypt in 669 BCE but dies on his way. Instead, Ashurbanipal (668–631 BCE) reconquers Lower Egypt in 667 BCE, pardoning and reinstalling Esarhaddon’s Egyptian vassals. The Assyrian army is active in Upper Egypt later on, in its suppression of an anti-Assyrian conspiracy. The Sais-based ruler Necho I (672–664 BCE) is punished but then pardoned in this context. Soon thereafter, in 664 BCE, the Kushite king returns to the Delta, challenging Assyrian dominion. Ashurbanipal returns with his army, captures the Delta along with Memphis, and pursues the fleeing Kushite king all the way to the south, sacking Thebes in the process. Eventually, the former Assyrian vassal, Psammetichus I (664–610 BCE), son of Necho I, pushes both the Assyrians and Kushites out. Yet, at the end of the 7th century BCE, Assyria and Egypt join forces against Babylonia.²³

Neo-Assyrian imperial ideology can be summarized in many ways. If focusing on the driving force of the empire, some scholars stress the materialistic aspect, namely that Assyrian expansionism was due to the need or urge to acquire land, people, and resources.²⁴ Other scholars emphasize the idealistic aspect, pointing, for example, to the coronation in which the Assyrian king is urged by the deities to go out and conquer the world, conducting a “holy war.”²⁵ If focusing on the mechanics of empire-building, a notion of a divinely decreed development process (more or less in line with historians’ view on Assyria’s expansion)²⁶ in which a foreign land is remote and unknown but destined to become conquered and incorporated has been identified by numerous scholars. Therefore, the progressive expansion of Assyria is viewed as part of a divine plan.²⁷ If focusing on the annexation method, some scholars see the Assyrian way of ruling distant territories as involving an idealistic “Assyrianization” of local material and intellectual culture,²⁸ while other scholars point to the fact that Assyria employed local rulers in order to govern distant regions, simply satisfied with receiving taxes and formal submission from these polities.²⁹ The traditional and mainstream view on the Neo-Assyrian Empire arguably centers on the latter (materialistic) aspect, seeing the empire as pragmatically oriented.³⁰

REPRESENTATIONS OF UPPER EGYPT IN THE SOURCES

The previously mentioned text surveys and database searches resulted in the gathering of texts from three Neo-Assyrian reigns. Sargon II writes of having heard of *Uriššu*, Esarhaddon talks (for example) of being the king of (Lower) Egypt, (Upper) Egypt (*Paturisu*), and Kush, and Ashurbanipal says (for example) that he has Upper Egyptian vassals and that his army went upstream to sack the southern city of Thebes (*Nī’*). The less rhetorical texts in the State Archives of Assyria did not yield any attestations, only the royal inscriptions of the mentioned kings.

In the following sections of this paper, the obtained attestations will be discussed, focusing on their ideological aspects. The collected data provide evidence of ten different themes. These can, in turn, be divided into three different phases. In the exploring phase, Upper Egypt is the distant place. In the conquering phase, Upper Egypt is the entrusted (to the Assyrian king by the deities), hostile,

attacked, abandoned, conquered, plundered, and destroyed place. In the governing phase, Upper Egypt is the subjugated and ruled place.

I: THE EXPLORING PHASE

The development of the imagery of Upper Egypt in Assyrian state ideology starts with the exploring phase, dating to a time in which Assyria was barely in contact with this land.

I.1: *The Distant Place*

Uriššu is referred to in Sargon II’s “great summary inscription” from Khorsabad (*Dūr-Šarrukīn*), where the Assyrian king tells of the Philistine city-state Ashdod (*Asdūdu*) and its new ruler Jamani actively resisting the ambitions of the Neo-Assyrian Empire in 712 BCE. Sargon II swiftly reacts by sending his army toward Ashdod.

Und kaum hörte jener Jamani in der Ferne von meinem Heereszug, da floh er zur Grenze Ägyptens im Bereich des Landes Meluḥḥa, und sein Aufenthaltsort war nicht zu finden. Asdūdu, Gimtu (und) Asdudimmu umzingelte und eroberte ich, seine Götter, seine Frau, seine Söhne, seine Töchter, das Hab und Gut, den Schatz aus seine Palast, rechnete ich zusammen mit den Bewohnern seines Landes zur Beute. Diese Städte gestaltete ich völlig neu: Leute aus von mir eroberten Ländern, aus [...] von Sonnenaufgang, [siedelte ich] in ihnen an (und) [setzte einen meiner Eunuchen als] Provinz[herrn] über [sie ein]. Ich zählte sie zu den Einwohnern Assyriens und sie schleppten mein Joch. Als der König des Landes Meluḥḥa, der in ..., (IM) LAND URIŠŠU, EINEM ORT, DER UNZUGÄNGLICH IST, (DESSEN) WEG [.....] ..., dessen Vorfahren [seit] den fernsten [Zeiten] bis heute meinen königlichen Vorfahren niemals ihren Gesandten geschickt haben, um sich nach deren Wohlbefinden zu erkundigen, (als also er) über weite Entfernung hinweg von der Macht Assurs, Nabūs und Marduks hörte, da überkam ihn die Furcht vor dem schrecklichen Glanz meiner Königsherrschaft und Angst erfüllte ihn. Er (der König von Meluḥḥa) legte ihm (Jamani) mit Stangen und Ringen (verbundene) eiserne Fesseln an, und (über) den (ganzen)

weiten Weg bis nach Assyrien brachte man ihn her zu mir (*ISKh*³¹ 2.4: 101–112).³²

At the approach of Sargon II's army, Jamani of Ashdod responds by fleeing to an African territory controlled by a certain king of Meluhha (Kush).³³ This king of Meluhha is pictured as frightened by Assyria and its forces and consequently decides to extradite Jamani.

The primary ideological theme of the above passage is Upper Egypt as the distant place.³⁴ The king of Meluhha apparently stays in *Uriššu* (Thebes?)³⁵ when fright strikes him.³⁶ *Uriššu* is in this context described as "einem Ort, der unzugänglich ist, (dessen) Weg [.....]." The term used is *ašar lā a'āri*, meaning "inaccessible place."³⁷ The lacuna makes the continuation unclear, although a claim that the road (*urhu*) leading to *Uriššu* is difficult is probable.³⁸ The ensuing narration most likely tells of the king of Kush (not the land of *Uriššu*) not sending messengers to Assyria before.³⁹ Jamani is said to have fled "zur Grenze (*itū*) Ägyptens im Bereich (*pātu*) des Landes Meluhha." This rather cryptical statement must, in the context of the above, mean that Jamani came to Upper Egypt, where the Kushite king dominated as well as resided.⁴⁰ It is then said of Jamani that "sein Aufenthaltsort (*ašru*) war nicht zu finden (*lā amāru N*)," as if Jamani disappeared into a black hole by coming to southern Egyptian territory.

II: THE CONQUERING PHASE

The development of the imagery of Upper Egypt in Assyrian state ideology goes on with the conquering phase, telling of a time in which the Neo-Assyrian Empire expanded into Africa.

II.1: The Entrusted Place

Paturisu is mentioned in a clay tablet fragment from Nineveh (the capital of Assyria) and the reign of Esarhaddon, the first Assyrian ruler to conquer Egypt (in 671 BCE). This tablet (K 13753) should date to 671 BCE or after, and the only text fragment of it is given below.

[...] ... [...] ENTRUSTED ... [TO ME ... (LOWER) EG]YPT, UPPER EG[YPT ...] ... he establish[ed ...] where I trod, the border of [... Kardun]iaš ([Babylon]ia) ... [...] ... [...] which (is) in the midst [of ...] (RINAP 4, 42: 1'–8').⁴¹

Because of the fragmentary nature of the text, it is not possible to draw any definite conclusions. That said, the topic of the passage can tentatively be identified as pointing to Assyrian imperialism in relation to Egypt and Babylonia, judging by the toponyms and verbs.

The text fragment seems to convey Esarhaddon's claim of universal rulership, here with regard to Egypt and Babylonia.⁴² Even though there are unfortunate lacunae, the first part of the preserved text seems to say that Lower (*Mušur*) and Upper Egypt have been entrusted (*umallā qātūa*)⁴³ to Esarhaddon. The entrusting agents have to be the Mesopotamian deities, expressing a theme that is in line with the notion of Assyrian imperial ideology as divinely decreed.⁴⁴

Upper Egypt, here represented by the city of Thebes, is mentioned also in the royal inscriptions of Ashurbanipal, the son and heir of Esarhaddon. In the annals of Ashurbanipal, the said king for example tells of his second campaign to Egypt, in 663 BCE. A new Kushite ruler, Tanutamon (664–656 BCE), had recaptured (much of) the Delta from Ashurbanipal. The Assyrian army responds by reconquering Lower Egypt, and Tanutamon flees southwards.

I took the road in pursuit of Tanutamon (and) I marched as far as the city Thebes, his fortified city. He saw the assault of my mighty battle array and abandoned the city Thebes; he fled to the city Kipkipi. WITH THE SUPPORT OF THE DEITIES AŠŠUR, SÎN, ŠAMAŠ, BÊL (MARDUK), NABÛ, IŠTAR OF NINEVEH, IŠTAR OF ARBELA, NINURTA, NERGAL, AND NUSKU, I conquered Thebes (and) Heliopolis in their (lit. "its") entirety (RINAP 5/1, 9: i 43–49).⁴⁵

In other words, the army of Ashurbanipal seizes the city of Thebes (and Heliopolis, a city in northern Egypt), while Tanutamon once again flees, this time "to the city Kipkipi," a city that traditionally has been located to the Kom Ombo region.⁴⁶

Also, the above text passage conveys the ideological theme of Upper Egypt as the entrusted place.⁴⁷ In this context, the clause that Ashurbanipal's army conquered Thebes (and Heliopolis) completely "with the support (*tukultu*) of the deities Aššur, Sîn, Šamaš, Bêl (Marduk), Nabû, Ištar of Nineveh, Ištar of Arbela, Ninurta, Nergal, and Nusku" shows that the Mesopotamian deities,

headed by the state god Ashur, entrust Upper Egypt to Assyria by granting military victory. The support is massive, with ten deities, both gods and goddesses, backing Ashurbanipal and his army.⁴⁸

II.2: The Hostile Place

Another excerpt from Ashurbanipal's annals describes the prelude to his second Egyptian campaign, thus talking of the Kushite king threatening Assyrian interests in the Delta.

Afterwards, Tanutamun, the son of his sister, sat upon his royal throne. HE MADE THE CITIES THEBES (AND) HELIOPOLIS HIS FORTRESSES (AND) ASSEMBLED HIS FORCES. To fight against the Assyrian troops who were inside the city Memphis, he mobilized his battle array, confined those people, and cut off their escape route. A fast messenger came to Nineveh and told (this) to me (RINAP 5/1, 3: ii 5–11).⁴⁹

Tanutamon, the new king of Kush, formed the northern city Heliopolis and the southern city Thebes into his strongholds, and he went with his troops to Memphis and attacked the Assyrian forces stationed there, with Ashurbanipal soon receiving word of his men's exposed position.

The ideological theme to focus on here is Upper Egypt as the hostile place. This theme is expressed in the king's words that Tanutamun made (*šakānu*) Thebes into a fortress (*dannūtu*), assembling (*paḥāru* D) his forces (*ellatu*) therein, in order to attack (*maḥāṣu* Gt) the Assyrian presence in Memphis by means of his battle array (*qablu*). The Assyrian siege mentality, viewing the surrounding world as chaotic-hostile,⁵⁰ is expressed here.

II.3: The Attacked Place

Ashurbanipal was also in conflict with Taharqa (690–664 BCE), Tanutamun's predecessor. The Assyrian king narrates that he defeated Taharqa and his troops at Memphis (in 667 BCE), that Taharqa fled southwards to Thebes, and that the Assyrian army took soldiers and warships as booty. Ashurbanipal is informed of the outcome and decides on the next course of action.

I added to my huge forces the chief eunuch, all the governors and kings of Syria, my servants and vassals, with their forces and

ships, and the kings of Egypt, my servants and vassals, with their forces and ships, and sent them [t]o destroy Taharqa from Egypt and Kush. THEY WENT TO THEBES, the fortified city of Taharqa, king of Kush, a journey of a month and 10 days. Taharqa heard of the advance of my troops, abandoned [Memph]is, the city on which he had trusted, crossed the Nile and pitched camp on the other side (SAACT 10, 20: 29'–36').⁵¹

Thus, Ashurbanipal sends his army, reinforced by his own top officials (the chief eunuch and the king's governors) as well as by support troops from the Levant⁵² and Egypt itself, to Thebes. Taharqa has already reacted by fleeing from Memphis to Thebes.⁵³

An important ideological theme of this text passage is Upper Egypt as attacked.⁵⁴ It is expressed, first and foremost, in Ashurbanipal's statement that he sent (*šapāru*) the said forces from the reconquered Memphis to Thebes, with the coalition forces moving upstream (in their "marching," *alāku*, of 40 days' duration) on the Nile in southern Egypt,⁵⁵ in their intent on banishing Taharqa from Egypt and (!) Kush.⁵⁶ The statement that the coalition also consisted of "kings of Egypt" (*šarrāni māt Muṣur*) is noteworthy. Even though these kings probably came mainly from the Delta area, it is likely that also some Nile Valley rulers took part.⁵⁷

II.4: The Abandoned Place

The first Egyptian campaign of Ashurbanipal is focused on in the following quote. Taharqa has returned to Lower Egypt, reconquered Memphis, and attacked the kings and officials that Esarhaddon appointed. Ashurbanipal is informed about this, and he dispatches his army. His army defeats Taharqa's forces in a pitched battle in the north-eastern part of the Delta.

Taharqa heard about the defeat of his troops while (he was) inside the city Memphis. The awe-inspiring radiance of (the god) Aššur and the goddess Ištar overwhelmed him and he went into a frenzy. The brilliance of my royal majesty, with which the gods of heaven and netherworld had endowed me, covered him; he abandoned the city Memphis and, in order to save his (own) life, HE FLED INSIDE THE CITY THEBES. I seized that

city (Memphis) (and then) made my troops enter (and) reside there (RINAP 5/1, 3: i 76–82).⁵⁸

In sum, Taharqa receives the news of his forces' defeat while staying in Memphis. Divine radiance and brilliance cause Taharqa to lose control of himself,⁵⁹ and he flees head over heels from Memphis down to Thebes, while the Assyrian army takes possession of Memphis.

The (arguably) main ideological theme encountered in the above text passage is Upper Egypt as the abandoned place. It takes the shape of Taharqa escaping (*abātu* N), albeit temporarily, the Assyrian might by taking to Upper Egypt, in this case to Thebes. The area to the north of Thebes is in this way exposed and vulnerable to the Assyrian threat. This ideological theme naturally relates to the notion of the Assyrian enemy as a coward and pathetic individual in Assyrian propaganda.⁶⁰ It is a recurring phenomenon in the text passages of this paper.

II.5: The Conquered Place

A damaged alabaster tablet from Assur gives a summary inscription of Esarhaddon, telling of this ruler's most important military feats and of building projects dedicated to Ashur and Marduk. The first part of the text is missing. Thereafter, Esarhaddon tells of conquering or defeating various polities (for example, Sidon) and of imposing tribute on another (Dilmun).

I conquered the land Šubria to its full extent; I killed with the sword Ik-Teššup, its king, who would not listen to the words of my command; I conquered Tyre, which is in the midst of the sea, (and) took away all of the cities (and) possessions of Ba'alu, its king, who had trusted in Taharqa, king of Kush; (and) I CONQUERED (LOWER) EGYPT, UPPER EGYPT, AND KUSH, struck Taharqa, its king, five times with arrows, and ruled his entire land (RINAP 4, 60: 6'–9').⁶¹

Thus, Esarhaddon claims to have conquered the polities of Shubria (a mountainous polity northwest of Assyria) and Tyre (in Phoenicia). The Assyrian king proceeds by conquering Lower Egypt, Upper Egypt, and Kush (!), striking Taharqa, and taking over his land.

The ideological theme to center on here is, self-evidently, Upper Egypt as the conquered place.⁶² Lower Egypt, Upper Egypt (*Paturisu*), and Kush are all being conquered (*kašādu*).⁶³ Esarhaddon also claims to have beaten (*maḥāšu*) Taharqa and to have gained dominion over this enemy's land in the process. At least his claim of dominion over Kush is exaggerated.⁶⁴ In any case, the above text passage clearly states that Upper Egypt has been conquered.

Returning to Ashurbanipal's annals but staying with the conquering theme: Tanutammon ascends the Kushite throne, he threatens Memphis, Ashurbanipal dispatches troops, Tanutammon flees to Thebes, and the kings and officials that Ashurbanipal had stationed in Egypt at the time of his first campaign come and meet him, submissively kissing his feet.

I took the road [in purs]uit of Tanutammon (and) I marched as far as the city Thebes, his fortified city. He saw the assault of my battle array and abandoned the city Thebes; he fled to the city Kipkipi. [With] the support of (the god) Aššur and the goddess Ištar, I CONQUERED THAT CITY (THEBES) IN ITS ENTIRETY (RINAP 5/1, 3: ii 20–25).⁶⁵

In other words, after having reconquered Memphis, Ashurbanipal pursues Tanutammon to Thebes, whereto the latter had fled. The Kushite king flees again, this time to Kipkipi. Ashurbanipal conquers the whole of Thebes, with the aid of the deities Ashur and Ishtar.⁶⁶

Again, the ideological theme of Upper Egypt as the conquered place is the one to focus on.⁶⁷ Ashurbanipal ends the above narrative section by saying that he, using his "battle array" (*tīb tāḥāzi*), conquered (*ikšudā qātāya*)⁶⁸ the city of Thebes "in its entirety" (*ana siḫirtišu*).⁶⁹

II.6: The Plundered Place

Staying with Ashurbanipal's annals: the immediately following text passage centers on the sack of Thebes, with the mentioned city being targeted for Assyrian plundering.

[Si]lver, gold, precious stones, as much property of his palace as there was, garment(s) with multi-colored trim, linen garments, large horses, people — male and female — two tall obelisks cast with shiny

zahālû-metal, whose weight was 2,500 talents (and which) stood at a temple gate, I ripped (them) from where they were erected and took (them) to Assyria. I CARRIED OFF SUBSTANTIAL BOOTY, (WHICH WAS) WITHOUT NUMBER, FROM INSIDE THE CITY THEBES. I made my weapons prevail over Egypt and Kush and (thus) achieved victory. With full hand(s), I returned safely to Nineveh, my capital city (RINAP 5/1, 3: ii 26–37).⁷⁰

Thus, the Theban palace of Tanutamoni and a local temple are looted by the forces of the Assyrian king. The latter's victory is established, and much booty is taken to Nineveh.

The above passage naturally points to the ideological theme of Upper Egypt as the plundered place.⁷¹ The deed in question is summarized by the statement that "I (Ashurbanipal) carried off (*šalālu*) substantial booty (*šallatu kabittu*)." Metal, precious stones, valuable garments, horses (useful in warfare), and people are seized from the said palace and from the city as a whole.⁷² Moreover, two tall obelisks (*timmu*) are taken (*nasāḥu*) from a temple gate.⁷³ The heavy (*kabtu*), innumerable (*ana lā mīni*) booty is brought to the capital Nineveh. The final part also gives the imagery of Ashurbanipal with his hands full (*qātī malīte*) of booty.⁷⁴

II.7: The Destroyed Place

Turning to another edition of Ashurbanipal's annals, the Assyrian king has successfully revenged his father, defeated Taharqa, and reestablished Assyrian control over the Delta.

Tandamanê, the son of his (Taharqa's) sister, was seated on his throne and ruled over the country. He set up Thebes as his fortress, gathered his army, mobilized his weapons, and undertook a campaign to make war against my troops. With the support of Aššur, Sîn, and the great gods, my lords, he was defeated in battle on a wide plain and his army was crushed. Tandamanê escaped alone and entered Thebes, his royal city. They went after him on difficult roads as far as Thebes, a journey of a month and 10 days, conquered that city in its entirety and LEVELLED IT LIKE A DELUGE (SAACT 10, 20: 70'–r. 6).⁷⁵

In other words, after Taharqa passed away (scared to death!),⁷⁶ his successor Tanutamoni picks up the mantle of resisting Assyrian influence in Egypt. Memphis and Thebes are conquered by Ashurbanipal's troops. Tanutamoni consistently flees from the Assyrian forces (his Kipkipi-flight is edited out).⁷⁷

The ideological theme to center on here is Upper Egypt as the destroyed place.⁷⁸ It is sparsely attested in the annals (if not viewing also plunder as a form of destruction, which would be reasonable), but it is at least expressed in the final clause of the above passage. Ashurbanipal here argues that he levelled (*sapānu*) Thebes like the Deluge (*abūbiš*), thus alluding to the notion of complete destruction (wiping out the inhabited world) in Mesopotamian worldview.⁷⁹

III: THE GOVERNING PHASE

The development of the imagery of Upper Egypt in Assyrian state ideology concludes with the governing phase, telling of a time in which the Neo-Assyrian Empire ruled (parts of) Egypt.

III.1: The Subjugated Place

A complete limestone slab (BM 22465), possibly from Nineveh, contains a "proprietary inscription" of Esarhaddon. On account of its content, it cannot predate 671 BCE.

The palace of Esarhaddon, mighty king, king of the world, king of Assyria, governor of Babylon, king of Sumer and Akkad, KING OF THE KINGS OF (LOWER) EGYPT, UPPER EGYPT, (AND) KUSH, son of Sennacherib, king of Assyria, descendant of Sargon (II), king of Assyria (RINAP 4, 20: 1–6).⁸⁰

The slab is said to be from a palace, and the text enumerates some of the most important Assyrian royal titles,⁸¹ here given to Esarhaddon and his two closest predecessors.

The ideological theme to focus on here is Upper Egypt as the subjugated place. It is expressed in the title "king of the kings of (Lower) Egypt, Upper Egypt (*Paturisu*), (and) Kush," given to Esarhaddon and telling of this king's authority (real or fictive) over the lands in question. Again, Esarhaddon's claim of dominating Kush (at least) rings hollow.⁸² It is noticeable that this title is found along with prestigious titles that tell of authority over Assyria

and Babylonia. The conquest of (parts of) Egypt was thus something that Esarhaddon wanted to stress.⁸³

Returning to Ashurbanipal's annals but staying with the theme of subjugation: Ashurbanipal embarks on his first campaign to Egypt. His army succeeds in defeating the forces of Taharqa in a pitched battle, and the Assyrian troops follow up by seizing Memphis, while Taharqa flees to Thebes.

(As for) Necho, king of the cities Memphis and Sais, Šarru-lū-dāri, king of the city Pelusium, Pi-šan-Ḫuru, king of the city Natho, Pa-qruru, king of the city Pišaptu, Bokennife (Bukkunanni'pi), king of the city Athribis, Naḫkê, king of the city Heracleopolis, Puṭu-Bāšti, king of the city Tanis, Unamunu, king of the city Natho, Ḫur-ši-Ēšu, king of the city Sebennytos, Pūiama, king of the city Mendes, Sheshonq, king of the city Busiris, Tap-naḫte, king of the city Punubu, Bokennife (Bukkunanni'pi), king of the city Aḫni, Eptimu-rṭešu, king of the city Trenuthis, Naḫti-ḫuru-ansini, king of the city Pišapdi'a, Bukurninip, king of the city Paḫnutu, Ši-ḫû, king of the city Siut, Lamintu, king of the city Hermopolis, Išpimātu, king of the city Thinis, (and) Monthemhet, king of the city Thebes, those kings, governors, (and) officials whom the father who had engendered me had appointed in Egypt, who had abandoned their post(s) in the face of Taharqa's tactical advance, (and) had gone to (lit. "filled") the countryside, where their post(s) were, I REAPPOINTED THEM IN THEIR (FORMER) POSITIONS (RINAP 5/1, 11: i 90–113).⁸⁴

Twenty Egyptian kings, governors(?), and officials(?)⁸⁵ from the whole of Egypt are mentioned in the context of their being appointed by Esarhaddon and in their being reappointed by Ashurbanipal, despite these persons' bad behavior in the face of Taharqa's offensive.⁸⁶

The ideological theme that the above text passage centers on is of course Upper Egypt as a subjugated place.⁸⁷ Upper Egyptian rulers have here submitted to the Assyrian king(s). The list is ordered roughly along geographical principles. The final five rulers in this list come from Upper Egyptian regions,⁸⁸ namely the rulers from Paḫnutu (a city probably situated somewhere between Memphis and Her-

mopolis),⁸⁹ Siut (Asyut), Hermopolis, Thinis (Abydos), and Thebes. Monthemhet is described as the "king" (šarru) of Thebes.⁹⁰ Their subjugated status is implied by the verb "(re)appointed" (*paqādu* (D)) by the Assyrian king(s) and by the nouns "post" (*piqittu*) and "position" (*maškanu*) granted by the Assyrian king(s).

III.2: The Ruled Place

Staying with the same edition of Ashurbanipal's annals (and with the same text section): Ashurbanipal is not satisfied with simply accepting submissions and granting vassalage.

... those kings, governors, (and) officials whom the father who had engendered me had appointed in Egypt, who had abandoned their post(s) in the face of Taharqa's tactical advance, (and) had gone to (lit. "filled") the countryside, where their post(s) were, I reappointed them in their (former) positions. I REORGANIZED EGYPT AND KUSH, WHICH THE FATHER WHO HAD ENGENDERED ME HAD CONQUERED. I STRENGTHENED (ITS) GUARD MORE THAN PREVIOUSLY AND CONCLUDED (NEW) AGREEMENTS (WITH IT) (RINAP 5/1, 11: i 110–116).⁹¹

Thus, after having reinstalled the 20 Egyptian rulers in their positions of power, Ashurbanipal proceeds by reorganizing Egypt and (!) Kush, while focusing on defense and loyalty oaths.

The ideological theme that the above text passage arguably centers on is Upper Egypt as the ruled place.⁹² Ashurbanipal governs by reorganizing (*ana eššūti ašbat*) Egypt and Kush. Again, the inclusion of Kush is misleading.⁹³ More concretely, he governs through focusing on military defense by strengthening (*danānu* D) its guard (*maššartu*) "more than previously,"⁹⁴ and through highlighting loyalty oaths by means of concluding new agreements (*urakkisa rik-sāte*).⁹⁵

THE CASE OF UPPER EGYPT IN NEO-ASSYRIAN IMPERIAL IDEOLOGY

A contextualization of the results of this case study in relation to previous research on Neo-Assyrian imperial ideology (outlined in an earlier section) should be rewarding. Besides, such a contextualization will lead to a complete fulfillment of the primary

aim of this paper.

In the discussion on the driving force of the Neo-Assyrian Empire, this case study mostly tells of the materialistic aspect of imperial ideology, with the sources focusing on military-economic matters. Just to give an example, Ashurbanipal narrates that he “carried off substantial booty, (which was) without number, from inside the city Thebes.”⁹⁶ The idealistic factor is still present, not the least in the sources highlighting the divine support of the Assyrian king. For example, Ashurbanipal claims to have conquered Thebes (and Heliopolis) “with the support of the deities Aššur, Sîn, Šamaš, Bēl (Marduk), Nabû, Ištar of Nineveh, Ištar of Arbela, Ninurta, Nergal, and Nusku.”⁹⁷ Also, the idealistic factor (revealed, for example, by the divine coronation order about extending Assyria) frames the whole (down-to-earth) narration.⁹⁸

Moreover, this case study reveals the entire developmental process of Assyrian empire-building, in its identifying the acquisition of a territory from “start to finish.” In other words, the chain of events starts with Upper Egypt being exotic (and far from being controlled and “tamed”) and ends with its being subjugated and ruled. As for the beginning of the chain, Sargon II writes that Upper Egypt was “*einem Ort, der unzugänglich ist, (dessen) Weg [...]*”⁹⁹ in the context of his interaction with the Kushite king. As for the end of the chain, Esarhaddon claims to be the “king of the kings of (Lower) Egypt, Upper Egypt, (and) Kush,”¹⁰⁰ in this way asserting control of the whole of Egypt (and Kush!). In other words, also Upper Egypt is imagined as subjected to the (divinely decreed) development progression of the Neo-Assyrian Empire.

In terms of annexation method, this case study supports the idea of a relative loose control, with local vassals working for Assyria. A pervasive annexation of Egypt is not indicated. As for the vassals in question (twenty Egyptian rulers), Ashurbanipal narrates that he “reappointed them in their (former) positions”.¹⁰¹ Additionally, Assyria had garrisons and civil servants (checking the local vassals) in Egypt. Ashurbanipal here refers to (the Assyrian)¹⁰² “governors, (and) officials whom the father who had engendered me had appointed in Egypt.”¹⁰³ Indications of a tighter Assyrian control can still be seen. For example, Esarhaddon talks of having “ruled his (Taharqa’s) entire land,”¹⁰⁴ while Ashurbanipal mentions that he “reorganized Egypt

and Kush, which the father who had engendered me had conquered” and that he “strengthened (its) guard more than previously and concluded (new) agreements (with it).”¹⁰⁵ On the whole, though, decentralization is emphasized. As already noted, this annexation method applies to the materialistic aspect, in the sense that it speaks of a pragmatic view on empire-building.

In sum, this case study on images of Upper Egypt in Neo-Assyrian official inscriptions fits well into the general image of Neo-Assyrian imperial ideology presented in previous research. A full developmental process (on Assyrian empire-building) is attested, and the sources mostly tell of the materialistic driving force and of a relatively loose Assyrian annexation method employed in relation to Egypt.

REPRESENTATIONS OF (UPPER) EGYPT IN ALTERNATIVE SOURCES

Even though this paper centers on Neo-Assyrian official inscriptions, other kinds of sources (hinted at in an earlier section) need to be discussed in order to get a fuller picture. Besides, such a discussion will lead to a fulfillment of the secondary aim of this paper. These sources are other kinds of texts, iconography, and material remains, both Assyrian and Egyptian.¹⁰⁶

All situations in which Upper Egypt is specifically mentioned in Neo-Assyrian official inscriptions have been discussed above.¹⁰⁷ There is no indication that Upper Egypt is specifically mentioned in any Neo-Assyrian private text. A case in point is that the arguably most complete and up-to-date reference work on toponyms in Neo-Assyrian inscriptions (both official and private ones) does not give further attestations in the toponym entries *Paturisu* and *Uriššu*.¹⁰⁸ Also, ethnonyms based on *Paturisu* and *Uriššu* are not attested in Neo-Assyrian prosopography.¹⁰⁹

The Neo-Assyrian Empire is not explicitly mentioned in Egyptian official inscriptions,¹¹⁰ but later (not contemporary) Egyptian stories refer to the Assyrian period of Egyptian history.¹¹¹ One of the main episodes in the “Inaros Epic” is a conflict between Necho and Esarhaddon. Inaros (ruler of Athribis) and Pekrur (another Delta ruler) fight off the Assyrian threat. In the story, Esarhaddon writes a letter to Inaros, a duel between Inaros and an Assyrian sorceress manifested as a griffin takes place, and Pekrur seems to reach Esarhaddon’s palace in Assyria. The story conveys the notion of the

defeat and humiliation of Esarhaddon from the hands of Egypt and its rulers.¹¹² The “Story of Ahiqar” centers on the famous sage Ahiqar, who is counsellor to Sennacherib, and then to Esarhaddon (after being cleared from a false accusation). Interplays with Egypt and Egyptian rulers are major components of the story. The end is lost but should have included (again) the idea of the defeat and humiliation of Esarhaddon.¹¹³ The story “Djoser and Imhotep” highlights the Egyptian king Djoser and his vizier Imhotep and their struggle against Assyria. In search for Osiris’ limbs¹¹⁴ in Assyria, Imhotep turns against Assyria. A duel between Imhotep and Assyria (represented by a sorceress) takes place. In the end, Egypt wins and the Assyrian king surrenders and presents tribute. Osiris’ limbs are retrieved by the Egyptians.¹¹⁵ Six Egyptian historical figures play roles in the previously described Egyptian stories.¹¹⁶ None of these seem to be Upper Egyptian.¹¹⁷

Assyrian palace art also brings up the Assyrian conquest of Egypt, albeit sparsely.¹¹⁸ A relief in London from Ashurbanipal’s North Palace in Nineveh illustrates the Assyrian army seizing an Egyptian fortified city.¹¹⁹ The epigraph that should explain the action in the relief scene has not been preserved. Thus, it is not possible to identify the city with certainty. The most likely candidates are Memphis, Thebes, or a border fortress.¹²⁰ Anyway, the relief shows the Assyrian army targeting the city and entering it through ladders raised to the crenellations. People are depicted falling headlong from the city walls, supposedly fatally wounded. To the left, Assyrian soldiers lead away captured Kushite soldiers in a row. To the right, civilians (men, women, and children) walk away from their captured city, while bringing all their belongings. The reasons why the place in the relief has been identified as Egypt is due to the presence of the Kushite individuals and the waterway (obviously a great river) depicted by the fortified city.¹²¹ Another piece of Assyrian state art only indirectly relates to Upper Egypt. The Zincirli (ancient *Sam'al* in modern Turkey) stela in Berlin depicts Esarhaddon holding two prisoners (pacified enemies) by ropes. One of the prisoners has Kushite physical features.¹²² This person is on his knees, raises his hands, and looks up at Esarhaddon. Social perspective, or hierarchy of scale, is employed, with the Kushite not even reaching to the knees of the Assyrian king. There is no epigraph, but the main

text on the stela indicates that the Kushite crown prince may be the one depicted.¹²³ By contrast, Egyptian-Assyrian encounters are not seen in Egyptian state art.¹²⁴

Material remains in Egypt of the Assyrian presence are scarce.¹²⁵ An iron helmet excavated from Thebes was—at least previously—interpreted as a trace of the Assyrian occupation of Thebes.¹²⁶ The other way around (now focusing on an Egyptian artifact in Assyria), there is a bronze lion in Istanbul inscribed with a text saying that “(this is) booty from Egypt (and) Kush.” Obviously, it is not possible to state if this object is Upper Egyptian or not.¹²⁷ Fragments of three statues of Taharqa have been found in Nineveh,¹²⁸ and a partly preserved scarab commissioned by Taharqa has been excavated from Nimrud.¹²⁹ Furthermore, a small bronze and gold statuette of the Egyptian goddess Anukhet has been found in Nineveh.¹³⁰ There are also chance finds of Egyptian scarabs and amulets from Assyria (often in disturbed contexts).¹³¹ Numerous pieces of ivory with Egyptianized motifs have been excavated from Nimrud.¹³² Again, it is impossible to determine the exact origins of these artifacts.

In conclusion, the alternative Assyrian sources do not break with the pattern observed in the Neo-Assyrian official inscriptions. In the relief scene, Upper(?) Egypt is in the conquering phase, while Upper(?) Egypt is in the governing phase on the Zincirli stela. The Assyrian(?) helmet from Thebes tells of conquering and the bronze lion (for example) from Upper(?) Egypt speaks of plundering. Naturally, the Egyptian evidence (the later literary stories) gives a reversed perspective, in which Assyria is blameworthy.¹³³

CONCLUSION

This paper has focused on the Assyrian period of Egyptian history. Instead of (as usual) dealing with (Lower) Egypt and historical issues, it is concerned with the portrayal of Upper Egypt in the ideologically charged Neo-Assyrian official inscriptions. Secondly, alternative sources (iconography, material remains, and other texts) are also studied. Text surveys and database searches showed that Upper Egypt is referred to by three Neo-Assyrian kings.

The portrayal in question tells of three time-phases of Assyrian relations with southern Egypt. Assyria firstly explores the land in question. It then goes on to (guided by its imperial ideology) conquer Upper

Egypt, whereafter Assyria concludes by governing it. In other words, the Neo-Assyrian Empire goes from having no knowledge or control to having full knowledge and control in relation to the Nile valley, thus incorporating Upper Egypt.

The portrayal of Upper Egypt is also characterized by ten different ideological themes. In the exploring phase, Upper Egypt is described as distant. In the conquering phase, the Nile valley region is represented as entrusted (to the Assyrian king by the Mesopotamian deities), hostile (in making resistance), attacked, abandoned (by Kushite and Upper Egyptian rulers faced with the Assyrian forces), conquered, plundered, and destroyed. The sack of Thebes (on Ashurbanipal's second Egyptian campaign) is highlighted in the last-mentioned themes. In the governing phase, Upper Egypt is subjugated (with the Assyrian king having a title telling of power over southern Egypt and by his having south-Egyptian vassals) and ruled (with the Assyrian king actually ruling Egypt, in this context by focusing on garrisons and treaties).

This case study shows that Assyrian conceptions of Upper Egypt closely corresponded with Neo-Assyrian imperial ideology as a whole (as portrayed in previous research). It centers on the materialistic and (in a way also on the) idealistic foundations of Neo-Assyrian imperial ideology. Moreover, the case study covers many different phases, including the start (the foreign land as unknown and "wild") and the finish (the foreign land as subjugated and ruled). Also, it focuses (mainly) on indirect rule as the annexation method in this "periphery." The alternative (textual, iconographic, and archaeological) Assyrian sources tell the same story, while the Egyptian ones have a reversed perspective, portraying the Egyptians as heroes and the Assyrians as villains.

ABBREVIATIONS

CAD	Gelb et al. 1956–2011
ISKh	Fuchs 1994
RANT	<i>Res Antiquae</i>
RIMA 2	Grayson 1991
RIMA 3	Grayson 1996
RINAP 4	Leichty 2011
RINAP 5/1	Novotny and Jeffers 2018
SAACT 10	Novotny 2014
SAAS 8	Fuchs 1998

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- Breyer 2003; Dallibor 2005; Pope 2014. Other works discuss Assyria but only indirectly (see, e.g., Spalinger 1974a; 1974b; 1978b; Kahn 2004; 2006; 2014).
- ⁴ The work by H.-U. Onasch (1994) on the Assyrian conquest of Egypt mainly deals with the Assyrian evidence. Clearer Assyriological contributions are Radner 2008; 2012; Sano 2016. The paper by M. Elat (1978) stands out by focusing on economic relations (between the Neo-Assyrian Empire and Egypt).
- ⁵ Problems such as the regnal years of Piye (king of Kush), the possible coregency between Shebitqu and Shabaqa (kings of Kush), and the fates of Necho I (king of Sais) and Tanutamoni (king of Kush).
- ⁶ For an ideological background (highlighting Neo-Assyrian imperial ideology), see the following discussion.
- ⁷ With regard to "state letters and documents," mainly royal letters and state treaties are intended.
- ⁸ For a historical background (focusing on Egypt and Assyria in Neo-Assyrian times), see the following discussion.
- ⁹ These sources will be presented and discussed in the section devoted to the secondary aim.
- ¹⁰ RIMA 2 and 3 contain the inscriptions of the early Neo-Assyrian rulers (934–745 BCE).
- ¹¹ RINAP 1–5 contain the inscriptions of the late (or "Sargonid") Neo-Assyrian rulers. Since volume 2 (with Sargon II's texts) awaits publication, the studies by A. Fuchs (*ISKh* and SAAS 8) on Sargon II's texts from Khorsabad, Nineveh, and Assur and by G. Frame (1999) on the Tang-i Var Inscription were used. For the text on the "Large Egyptian Tablets" (not included in RINAP 5/1), SAACT 10 (by J. Novotny) was used.
- ¹² The search words in question were Egypt (with derivatives), Upper, south(ern), Nile, valley, and Thebes (with derivatives). These search words should ensure a valid result. As already noted, the royal inscriptions were also manually surveyed. General references to "Egypt (*Muṣur*)" were not taken into account, due to their not pointing directly to Upper Egypt and in their likely referring primarily to the Delta (Fuchs 1994, 469).

NOTES

- ¹ This definition of the Assyrian period starts with Esarhaddon's conquest of (Lower) Egypt and ends with Psammetichus I's expulsion of Assyrian forces from Egypt. A broader definition begins with the first attested contact under Shalmaneser III in the 9th century BCE and concludes with the final days of the Neo-Assyrian Empire under Ashur-uballit II (611–609 BCE).
- ² This can be concluded, e.g., from the *British Museum Dictionary of Ancient Egypt* (Shaw and Nicholson 1995, 41–42), where the entry "Assyrians" is brief, there are references to general history books, the word "invaded" is used, and the statement that Assyria "minimized their impact on the society and economy of the Egyptians, particularly when compared with the effects of the Persian, Ptolemaic and Roman regimes" is made.
- ³ See, e.g., Kitchen 1973; Spalinger 1976; 1978a;

- ¹³ The Royal Inscriptions of Assyria online (RIAo) Project : < <http://oracc.org/riao/corpus/> >, accessed 15 September 2019.
- ¹⁴ The Royal Inscriptions of the Neo-Assyrian Period online: < <http://oracc.org/rinap/corpus/> >, accessed 15 September 2019.
- ¹⁵ State Archives of Assyria Online: < <http://oracc.org/saao/corpus/> >, accessed 5 July 2019.
- ¹⁶ See, e.g., the reference works on Neo-Assyrian toponyms: Parpola 1970, 276; Bagg 2017, 476–477, 633.
- ¹⁷ Ranke 1910, 31; Spalinger 1974a, 320. For Memphis, see Parpola 1970, 246; Bagg 2017, 424–425.
- ¹⁸ Fuchs 1994, 469; Bagg 2017, 433–437, 476–477, 633.
- ¹⁹ Kohler and Baumgartner 2004, 930; Görg 2004, 365 (noting the distinction *Miṣraim*–*Patrusîm*).
- ²⁰ Parpola 1970, 218; Bagg 2017, 356–358.
- ²¹ In other words, who (Egyptians/Kushites) were involved and what was the nature of the relationship (hostile/friendly). The following historical background is, for the purposes of this paper, just an outline.
- ²² Helck 2005, 150–151. For fuller backgrounds, see, e.g., Kitchen 1973, Onasch 1994, and Kuhrt 1997.
- ²³ Helck 2005, 151–152. For fuller backgrounds, see, e.g., Kitchen 1973, Onasch 1994, and Kuhrt 1997.
- ²⁴ See, e.g., Liverani 1979, centering on accumulation and exploitation.
- ²⁵ See, e.g., Spieckermann 1982, where the Assyrians are pictured as religious fanatics.
- ²⁶ For the usefulness of Assyrian royal inscriptions for historians, see, e.g., H. Tadmor (1997), who proposes that once the “codes” of the inscriptions are cracked, historical events and developments can be distinguished.
- ²⁷ See, e.g., Oded 1992; Holloway 2001; Karlsson 2016, 113–122.
- ²⁸ See, e.g., Beaulieu 2005, suggesting frequent examples of “Assyrianization.”
- ²⁹ See, e.g., Postgate 1992, focusing on the distinction between provinces and vassal states.
- ³⁰ See, e.g., Fales 2010, in which the idealistic factor is recognized but downplayed. The same down-to-earth interpretation is made by P. Gerardi (1987) and H. Tadmor (1997), who both pursue structural approaches.
- ³¹ The translations of text passages in this paper are given as rendered in *ISKh* or RINAP, with the exception of the occasional skipping of spaces between text sections and of the highlighting of key sections in SMALL CAPS.
- ³² *ISKh* 2.4: 101–112, pp. 220–222; translation: Fuchs 1994, 348–349.
- ³³ For the equation of Meluhha with Kush, see Röllig 1983. The Kushite king in question was probably Shebitku (c. 706–690), judging by the recently published Tang-i Var Inscription (Frame 1999, 54).
- ³⁴ Secondary themes are Upper Egypt as the hostile and abandoned place. Upper Egypt is hostile in the sense that it (initially) harbors an Assyrian enemy, and it is abandoned in its being left exposed to the Assyrians.
- ³⁵ For the prominent role of Thebes for the Kushite rulers, see Redford 2004, 117–138.
- ³⁶ See the directly preceding phrases “Als der König des Landes Meluhha, der in” Cf. Fuchs 1994, 451.
- ³⁷ The inaccessibility can refer to mountains, regions, fortresses, etc. Cf. CAD A II, 319.
- ³⁸ Relating to the literary themes “heroic priority” and “difficult path,” in which the Assyrian king breaks new ground and surpasses everyone and in which the foreign lands are remote and rugged (Liverani 1979, 304–309; Gelio 1981).
- ³⁹ As already pointed out in NOTE 36, the king of Meluhha is the grammatical subject.
- ⁴⁰ Thus linking Jamani’s fleeing to the king of Meluhha staying in *Uriṣṣu*. Cf. Fuchs 1994, 451. Similarly, G. Frame (1999, 52) identifies Jamani’s hiding place as “Egyptian territory, near the border with Nubia.” Before him, A. L. Oppenheim (1969, 286) identified “the territory of Musru — which belongs (now) to Ethiopia.”
- ⁴¹ RINAP 4, 42: 1’–8’; translation: Leichty 2011, 97.
- ⁴² For outlines of Neo-Assyrian state ideology, see, e.g., Liverani 1979 and Karlsson 2016. M. Liverani focuses on Assyrian royal inscriptions and identifies the formulation of various inequalities as the kernel of the imperial ideology. The present author’s own work centers on the different roles

- of the Assyrian king in relation to the foreign lands.
- ⁴³ Literally, “(they) filled my (Esarhaddon’s) hands” with Lower and Upper Egypt.
- ⁴⁴ See, e.g., Oded 1992; Holloway 2001; and the Assyrian coronation texts (emphasizing the king’s mission from the deities to go out and conquer the world), published in Müller 1937 and Livingstone 1989 (text 11).
- ⁴⁵ RINAP 5/1, 9: i 43–49; translation: Novotny and Jeffers 2018, 193. For parallel text passages, see RINAP 5/1, 3: ii 20–25; 4: ii 1’–3’; 6: iii 37’–42’; 7: iii 1’; 11: ii 34–38.
- ⁴⁶ For “Kipkipi” as a place (identified with the Ptolemaic city *Ggb*) south of Thebes, see, e.g., Röllig 1980 and Bagg 2017, 343. For seeing “Kipkipi” as an Akkadian term, expressing an idiom, see Breyer 2014. For viewing “Kipkipi” as referring to Napata, the capital of Kush, see Karlsson 2019.
- ⁴⁷ Secondary themes are Upper Egypt as the attacked, hostile (by Tanutamoni having a fortress in defense against Assyria), abandoned (by Tanutamoni fleeing to Kipkipi), and conquered place.
- ⁴⁸ The most powerful deities are listed, including the Babylonian gods Marduk and Nabu. Two aspects of the warrior goddess Ishtar (of Arbela and Nineveh) and the warrior gods Ninurta and Nergal are also enumerated. For the attributes of each of these deities, see, e.g., their respective entries in Black and Green 1992.
- ⁴⁹ RINAP 5/1, 3: ii 5–11; translation: Novotny and Jeffers 2018, 60. For parallel text passages, see RINAP 5/1, 4: ii 1–8; 6: iii 18’–27’; 11: ii 22–27.
- ⁵⁰ Liverani 1995, 2362–2363. This Assyrian siege mentality is attested already in Assyrian royal inscriptions from the Middle Assyrian period and the Amarna age (Liverani 2001, 79–85).
- ⁵¹ SAACT 10, 20: 29’–36’; translation: Novotny 2014, 100. For a parallel text passage, see RINAP 5/1, 2: iv 7–17.
- ⁵² Consisting of no fewer than “all of the kings of Across the River (*Eber nāri*).” Following the Assyrian worldview, lands across (*ebēru*) the Euphrates were to the west of this great river.
- ⁵³ The mention of Memphis in the above text passage must be a scribal error. An earlier passage of this text states that Taharqa flees from Memphis to Thebes (SAACT 10, 20: 24’–26’).
- ⁵⁴ Secondary themes are Upper Egypt as the hostile, abandoned, and possibly subjugated (if the Egyptian part of the coalition also consisted of south-Egyptian rulers) place.
- ⁵⁵ “Marching,” although rowing the Nile must have been the mode of transportation, as indicated by the references to “boats” (*eleppu*) contributed both from the Levant and Lower Egypt. The above passage is unique in explicitly mentioning the Nile (*Yaru’u*) (Parpola 1970, 185; Bagg 2017, 678).
- ⁵⁶ It is almost as if Upper Egypt is regarded as Kush in its being controlled by the Kushite king.
- ⁵⁷ The list of Assyrian vassals from Egypt (see the text passage of SECTION III.1b) mentions a few southern rulers.
- ⁵⁸ RINAP 5/1, 3: i 76–82; translation: Novotny and Jeffers 2018, 59. For parallel text passages, see RINAP 5/1, 2: iii 1’–iv 2; 4: i 60–66; 6: ii 67’–75’; 11: i 83–89; SAACT 10, 20: 23’–27’.
- ⁵⁹ For the idea of divine and royal (god-given) radiance, see Cassin 1968.
- ⁶⁰ For the (defect) moral character of the Assyrian enemy, see Fales 1982 (focusing on the moral character of the enemy in the textual narrative of Assyrian royal inscriptions) and Karlsson 2017 (analyzing Assyrian royal titles and epithets from all periods and focusing on the ones that also mention opponents and non-Assyrians).
- ⁶¹ RINAP 4, 60: 6’–9’; translation: Leichty 2011, 135.
- ⁶² A secondary theme is Upper Egypt as the ruled place (Esarhaddon “ruled” Taharqa’s “entire land”).
- ⁶³ See, e.g., A. Kuhrt (1997, 634–636) on Assyrian “invasions” on African soil.
- ⁶⁴ Kuhrt 1997, 634–636; Helck 2005, 150–152.
- ⁶⁵ RINAP 5/1, 3: ii 20–25; translation: Novotny and Jeffers 2018, 61. For parallel text passages, see RINAP 5/1, 4: ii 1’–3’; 6: iii 37’–42’; 7: iii 1’; 9: i 43–49; 11: ii 34–38.
- ⁶⁶ This time (cf. the passage in SECTION II.1b), only two deities (Ashur and Ishtar) orchestrate the Assyrian king’s victory.

- ⁶⁷ Secondary themes are Upper Egypt as the entrusted, hostile, attacked, and abandoned place.
- ⁶⁸ Literally, “my (two) hands conquered”.
- ⁶⁹ Supposedly including the less populated west bank (necropolis area), mentioned in the text passage of SECTION II.3.
- ⁷⁰ RINAP 5/1, 3: ii 26–37; translation: Novotny and Jeffers 2018, 61. For parallel text passages, see RINAP 5/1, 4: ii 3’–11’; 6: iii 43’–57’; 7: iii 2’–15’; 11: ii 39–48; 12: ii 7’–14’; 23: 82; SAACT 10, 20: r. 7–11.
- ⁷¹ A secondary theme is Upper Egypt as the conquered place, as indicated by Ashurbanipal saying that “I made my weapons prevail over Egypt and Kush and (thus) achieved victory.”
- ⁷² The sack of Thebes was hardly restricted to the palace and a temple but must have affected the whole city.
- ⁷³ The name of the temple is not given.
- ⁷⁴ Although Ashurbanipal frequently narrates in the first person, he did not go to Egypt, as implied in J. Novotny’s and J. Jeffers’ (2018, 17) references to Ashurbanipal dispatching his army to Egypt.
- ⁷⁵ SAACT 10, 20: 70’– r. 6; translation: Novotny 2014, 101.
- ⁷⁶ For the imagery of Taharqa being scared to death, see the text Assurbanipal 74 (line 70’) available at < <http://oracc.org/rinap/Q003773> > (accessed 5 July 2019), to appear in RINAP 5/2. Taharqa is said to have been seriously injured already in a text of Esarhaddon (RINAP 4, 98: r. 40–41).
- ⁷⁷ For the editing of Ashurbanipal’s narrations of his Egyptian campaigns, see Fales 1981. F. M. Fales here regards variations in Assyrian royal inscriptions as (primarily) telling of propagandistic priorities.
- ⁷⁸ Secondary themes are Upper Egypt as the hostile, attacked, abandoned, and conquered place.
- ⁷⁹ See Bottéro 2001, 102. Cf. CAD A I, p. 77.
- ⁸⁰ RINAP 4, 20: 1–6; translation: Leichty 2011, 68. For parallel text passages, see RINAP 4, 68: 1–5; 69: 2–7; 83: 1–3; 95: 1–5; 98: 13–16; 103: 4–6; 112: i 1–10.
- ⁸¹ For Assyrian royal titulary, see, e.g., Cifola 1995 (mapping and discussing titulary from the Old Assyrian period to the early Neo-Assyrian period) and Karlsson 2017 (mapping and discussing titulary from all periods that also refer to opponents [to the Assyrian king] and non-Assyrians).
- ⁸² Kuhrt 1997, 634–636; Helck 2005, 150–152.
- ⁸³ This context is given throughout, also in the parallel text passages listed in NOTE 80.
- ⁸⁴ RINAP 5/1, 11: i 90–113; translation: Novotny and Jeffers 2018, 233.
- ⁸⁵ The translation is quite misleading at this point. It is unlikely that the 20 Egyptian kings (or a part of these kings) served as Assyrian “governors” (*bēl pīhāti*) or “officials” (*qēpu*). Cf. Dubovský 2012.
- ⁸⁶ In their having “abandoned their post(s) in the face of Taharqa’s tactical advance.”
- ⁸⁷ A secondary theme is Upper Egypt as the abandoned place (by south-Egyptian vassals fleeing).
- ⁸⁸ The Upper Egyptian status of Pishapdi’a is uncertain (Bagg 2017, 481). The city Hininshi probably refers to Herakleopolis *parva* (in the Delta), not to Herakleopolis *magna* (in the Nile Valley) (Bagg 2017, 231).
- ⁸⁹ Parpola 1970, 278; Bagg 2017, 481.
- ⁹⁰ On this powerful mayor, see, e.g., Leclant 1961.
- ⁹¹ RINAP 5/1, 11: i 110–116; translation: Novotny and Jeffers 2018, 233.
- ⁹² Secondary themes are Upper Egypt as the abandoned, conquered (by Esarhaddon), and subjugated place.
- ⁹³ Kuhrt 1997, 634–636; Helck 2005, 150–152.
- ⁹⁴ Cf. CAD M I, 335, for the military connotation.
- ⁹⁵ Cf. CAD R, 104, for the loyalty oath-dimension.
- ⁹⁶ RINAP 5/1, 3: ii 33–34; translation: Novotny and Jeffers 2018, 61.
- ⁹⁷ RINAP 5/1, 9: i 47–48; translation: Novotny and Jeffers 2018, 193.
- ⁹⁸ For the idea of Assyrian warfare as divinely decreed, see NOTE 44.
- ⁹⁹ *ISKh* 2.4: 110, p. 221; translation: Fuchs 1994, 348.
- ¹⁰⁰ RINAP 4, 20: 3–5; translation: Leichty 2011, 68.
- ¹⁰¹ RINAP 5/1, 11: i 113; translation: Novotny and

- Jeffers 2018, 233.
- ¹⁰² For the mentioned governors and officials as Assyrians, see NOTE 85.
- ¹⁰³ RINAP 5/1, 11: i 110–112; translation: Novotny and Jeffers 2018, 233.
- ¹⁰⁴ RINAP 4, 60: 9'; translation: Leichty 2011, 135.
- ¹⁰⁵ RINAP 5/1, 11: i 114–116; translation: Novotny and Jeffers 2018, 233.
- ¹⁰⁶ Due to the relative scarcity of these alternative sources, both sources that directly refer to Upper Egypt apropos the Neo-Assyrian Empire and those that only may do so will be discussed.
- ¹⁰⁷ The exclusion of general references to Egypt and Egyptians (*Muṣur[āiu]*) from this study is motivated by a delimitation need and (more importantly) by the already noted observation that these general references wholly or mostly refer to Lower Egypt. The general references (to Egypt and Egyptians) in question tell of these agents as targets of coercion (being enemies and subjects) and as resources (of divine, human, animal, and material kinds) in Neo-Assyrian state letters and documents (Karlsson 2018). See also the present author's forthcoming paper in *RANT* 17 on Egypt and Kush in Neo-Assyrian royal inscriptions, containing the same analysis (although differently balanced).
- ¹⁰⁸ Bagg 2017, 476–477, 633.
- ¹⁰⁹ That is, "the Upper Egyptian" is not attested as a personal name or as attributive to a personal name in the prosopographic data from the Neo-Assyrian Empire (cf. index in Baker 2017, 237–255).
- ¹¹⁰ As observed by W. Helck (2005, 151–152), "It is striking that there are no monuments from the time of Assyrian rule in Egypt, nor did those who fought against this control, such as Tanutamén and Montuemhat, the ruler of Thebes, mention their Assyrian overlords in texts. Only in later texts did the Assyrians emerge as sworn enemies. This suggests that Assyrian rule in Egypt was seen as an abnormal period and was therefore dealt with in a customary Egyptian fashion, by concealment."
- ¹¹¹ K. Ryholt (2004) brings up nine stories and fragments in his paper on the Assyrian conquest of Egypt in Egyptian literature, of which I bring up three (i.e., those that fully and clearly refer to Assyria). The remaining six are "The Struggle for Inaros' Armor," "The Aramaic Sheikh Fadl Inscription," Fragment P. Berlin P 15682, Fragment P. Trier Univ. Bibl. S 109A, "Naneferkasokar and the Babylonians," and "The Story of Nakhthorshen." The nine texts uniquely "relate or may relate to the Assyrian invasion and its aftermath." The Asiatic soldiers in the well-known "Story of Petekhons and Sarpot" (see, e.g., Hoffmann 1995) may rather be seen as Syrians (Ryholt 2004, 490). The prophecy "Bocchoris and the Lamb" (see, e.g., Gwyn Griffiths 1983, 285–286), in which the Assyrians are referred to as future invaders of Egypt, may also be mentioned here.
- ¹¹² See, e.g., Spiegelberg 1910. See also the discussion in Ryholt 2004, 492–495.
- ¹¹³ See, e.g., Harris et al. 1913. See also the discussion in Ryholt 2004, 497–499.
- ¹¹⁴ According to Egyptian mythology, the god Osiris was slayed and dismembered by his brother Seth. The assembling of Osiris' limbs brought about by his wife Isis was a symbol of resurrection (Quirke 1992, 58).
- ¹¹⁵ See Volten 1951. See also the discussion in Ryholt 2004, 500–502.
- ¹¹⁶ That is, Necho, Petubastis, Pektur, Nehka, Bokennife, and Nakhthornashen (Ryholt 2004, 485–490).
- ¹¹⁷ A certain Nekha of Hininshi, who is mentioned in the list of vassals discussed above (RINAP 5/1, 11: i 95), also features in the Inaros cycle, as the father of one Khahor. The latter is allied with Inaros against Assyria (Ryholt 2004, 488). As already noted (NOTE 88), Hininshi probably refers to Herakleopolis *parva*, a city in the Delta (Bagg 2017, 231). Tellingly, Nekha and his city are surrounded by delta rulers and cities in the list.
- ¹¹⁸ But note (outside the Assyrian period proper) the Egyptians(?) bringing tribute to Shalmaneser III on the "black obelisk" (Börker-Klähn 1982, fig. 152) and the Egyptian(?) soldiers in the relief art of Sargon II (Botta and Flandin 1849, pls. 86–89, 180). For a brief discussion on the latter Egyptians, see Spalinger 1981, 54.
- ¹¹⁹ See Brunner 1952–1953 and Barnett 1976, pl.

- XXXVI. Another, interconnected relief scene (preserved mostly through hand copies) also depicts the Assyrian army besieging a fortified Egyptian city (Barnett 1976, pl. LXX). For a discussion of both of these relief scenes, see Spalinger 1981, 54–56.
- ¹²⁰ Brunner 1952–53, 257–258.
- ¹²¹ Brunner 1952–53, 253–262.
- ¹²² The other prisoner is Asiatic, possibly a Phoenician ruler (Leichty 2011, 179–180).
- ¹²³ Börker-Klähn 1982, fig. 219. The Tell Ahmar (ancient Til Barsip) stela (Börker-Klähn 1982, figs. 217–218) contains the same scene. For a brief discussion based on the scene, see, e.g., Leichty 2011, 179–180. Apropos Kush and Esarhaddon, one of the glazed tiles from this king's palace in Nimrud seems to illustrate captive Kushites with feathers in their headbands (Unger 1928, pl. 38a).
- ¹²⁴ Helck 2005, 151–152 (and endnote 104). Even the heraldic motif of the Egyptian king smiting or trampling upon Asiatics (see, e.g., Shaw and Nicholson 1995, 232 and 278, showing Early Dynastic and Ptolemaic kings smiting Asiatics) seems to be unattested. As for Kushite state art, the reliefs in the temple of Amun at Gebel Barkal do not convey scenes of direct Kushite interaction with Assyria (Spalinger 1981, 46–52, figs. 2–6).
- ¹²⁵ Helck 2005, 151–152 (and endnote 110). As noted, this may be explained by the brevity of the period and by the mode of occupation, with the Assyrians dominating Egypt largely indirectly. Still, the texts mention that Sais and Athribis are given Akkadian names and refer to Assyrian troops stationed in Memphis between campaigns (see RINAP 4, 54: 20–25; SAACT 10, 20: 69'; RINAP 5/1, 11: i 127 [e.g.] resp.). This suggests that the Neo-Assyrian rulers had the ambition of remaking Egypt to some extent.
- ¹²⁶ For the helmet (kept in the University of Manchester Museum) as Assyrian, see Flinders Petrie 1897. For another approach, see Williams and Maxwell-Hyslop 1976.
- ¹²⁷ For the text, see RINAP 4, 141.
- ¹²⁸ See, e.g., al-Asil 1955, 130, for a photo of the object (now in Baghdad).
- ¹²⁹ See, e.g., Herrmann 1992, 78 (no. 178, pl. 38), for photos and drawings of the fragments (now in Baghdad).
- ¹³⁰ See, e.g., al-Asil 1955, 129, for a photo of the object (now in Baghdad). Anukhet is associated with the Elephantine area, i.e., with Upper Egypt (Quirke 1992, 48).
- ¹³¹ See, e.g., the Egyptian *udjat*-eye (dated to Egypt's Twenty-fifth dynasty) from Nineveh, published in Madhloum 1968, fig. 9B, and discussed in Pedersén and Troy 1993.
- ¹³² For a discussion (with references) of these ivories, see Karmel Thomason 2004, 159–160. A. Karmel Thomason (2004, 157–161) even identifies an “Egyptomania” in Assyria. Similarly, M. H. Feldman (2004) argues (pointing to suggested Egyptian influences in Assyrian art) that Egypt was not just another place that had been conquered. The access to Egyptian artifacts gave a special prestige, power, and legitimacy to the Assyrian kings.
- ¹³³ For the literary and iconographic topic of the foreigner as representing Chaos (*isft*) and threatening the Order (*m³t*) of the world and cosmos (maintained by the Egyptian king), see, e.g., Loprieno 1988 and Assmann 2006.