From snout to tail

Exploring the Greek sacrificial animal
from the literary, epigraphical,
iconographical, archaeological,
and zooarchaeological evidence

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ABSTRACT

Animal sacrifice fundamentally informed how the ancient Greeks defined themselves, their relation to the divine, and the structure of their society. Adopting an explicitly cross-disciplinary perspective, the present volume explores the practical execution and complex meaning of animal sacrifice within ancient Greek religion (*c.* 1000 BC–AD 200).

The objective is twofold. First, to clarify in detail the use and meaning of body parts of the animal within sacrificial ritual. This involves a comprehensive study of ancient Greek terminology in texts and inscriptions, representations on pottery and reliefs, and animal bones found in sanctuaries. Second, to encourage the use and integration of the full spectrum of ancient evidence in the exploration of Greek sacrificial rituals, which is a prerequisite for understanding the complex use and meaning of Greek animal sacrifice.

Twelve contributions by experts on the literary, epigraphical, iconographical, archaeological and zooarchaeological evidence for Greek animal sacrifice explore the treatment of legs, including feet and hoofs, tails, horns; heads, including tongues, brains, ears and snouts; internal organs; blood; as well as the handling of the entire body by burning it whole. Three further contributions address Hittite, Israelite and Etruscan animal sacrifice respectively, providing important contextualization for Greek ritual practices.

Keywords: Greek animal sacrifice, anatomy, division, butchery, body part, multi-disciplinary approaches, zooarchaeology, iconography, epigraphy, texts, cross-cultural comparisons

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ALICE MOUTON

13. Burnt animals for the Hittite gods

Cremation as a type of animal sacrifice in Hittite Anatolia

Abstract

The aim of this paper is to provide an overview of the Hittite textual evidence (Anatolia of the 17th–12th centuries BC) for sacrificial cremation of animals or animal body parts. Besides several occurrences of Hittite verb *warnu-*, "to burn", the Hurrian term *ambašše* "(something) that is burnt" is examined in context. Sacrificial cremation occurs during various types of rituals: invocations, substitutions, and others. In the form of the *ambašše* rite, it originates from Kizzuwatna, a region of Southern Anatolia that was under Hittite rule at least since the 16th century BC. Twenty-two excerpts of Hittite cuneiform texts are provided in order to illustrate the great variety of burnt sacrificial procedures.

Central Anatolia was the seat of the Hittite kingdom, a powerful political entity that prospered between the 17th and the end of 12th centuries BC. The thirty thousand fragments of cuneiform tablets uncovered in Hattuša/Boğazkale, the capital city, document many aspects of the main ritual traditions of Hittite Anatolia. The main ritual traditions which are described by the Hittite cuneiform texts are (cf. the map in *Fig. 1*): I. The Hatto-Hittite ritual traditions with an important Hattian cultural background (central Anatolia); II. The Luwian ritual traditions (the Lower Land in central-southern Anatolia and Arzawa in western Anatolia); III. The Kizzuwatnean ritual traditions (southern Anatolia).

Animal sacrifice is at the center of the ancient Anatolian religions.[1] The Hittite sacrificial modalities are numerous.[2] One possible way of sacrificing is to burn the sacrificial victim. The Hittite vocabulary distinguishes an animal that is being burnt (the verb *warnu-*) from an animal whose body is cooked (the verb *zanu-*). Whenever the animal is cooked (entirely or partially), it is retrieved afterward from the grill or the pot and then offered to the deity.[3] Differently, the Hittite texts very seldom mention that the burnt animal victim is collected afterward in order to be placed on the divine table.

That being said, we do not yet have a clear overview of the various modalities of burnt animal sacrifices in Hittite Anatolia, and this is precisely the aim of the present paper. This study does not pretend to be exhaustive: very many Hittite texts deal with burnt animal sacrifices. Therefore, I have made a selection of texts that seemed the most evocative. In making this selection, I looked for two main keywords: the Hittite verb *warnu-* "to burn" with an animal as a direct object, in a clear context of sacrifice, and the Hurrian noun *ambašše* "(something) that is burnt".[4]

Burning is not always about sacrificing. In some ritual contexts, one burns animal body parts without offering them to a

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[1] For recent overviews on Hittite religion, see Hutter 2021 and Rutherford 2020.

[2] For my definition of sacrifice, as well as an overview on Hittite animal sacrifice, see Mouton 2017.

[3] See Mouton 2007, 86–88.

[4] I was able to compile all the attestations of the Hittite verbs *war-* "to burn" (intransitive) and *warnu-* "to burn" (transitive) at the Akademie der Wissenschaften of Mainz in November 2016. I would like to thank Prof. Gernot Wilhelm, Prof. Daniel Schwemer and their whole team for allowing me to use their files and for welcoming me so nicely every year. Due to my collations (from photographs) of all the tablet excerpts that I quote in this paper, my readings might vary from the previous editions. In the following excerpts, English words in italics are hypothetical translations.
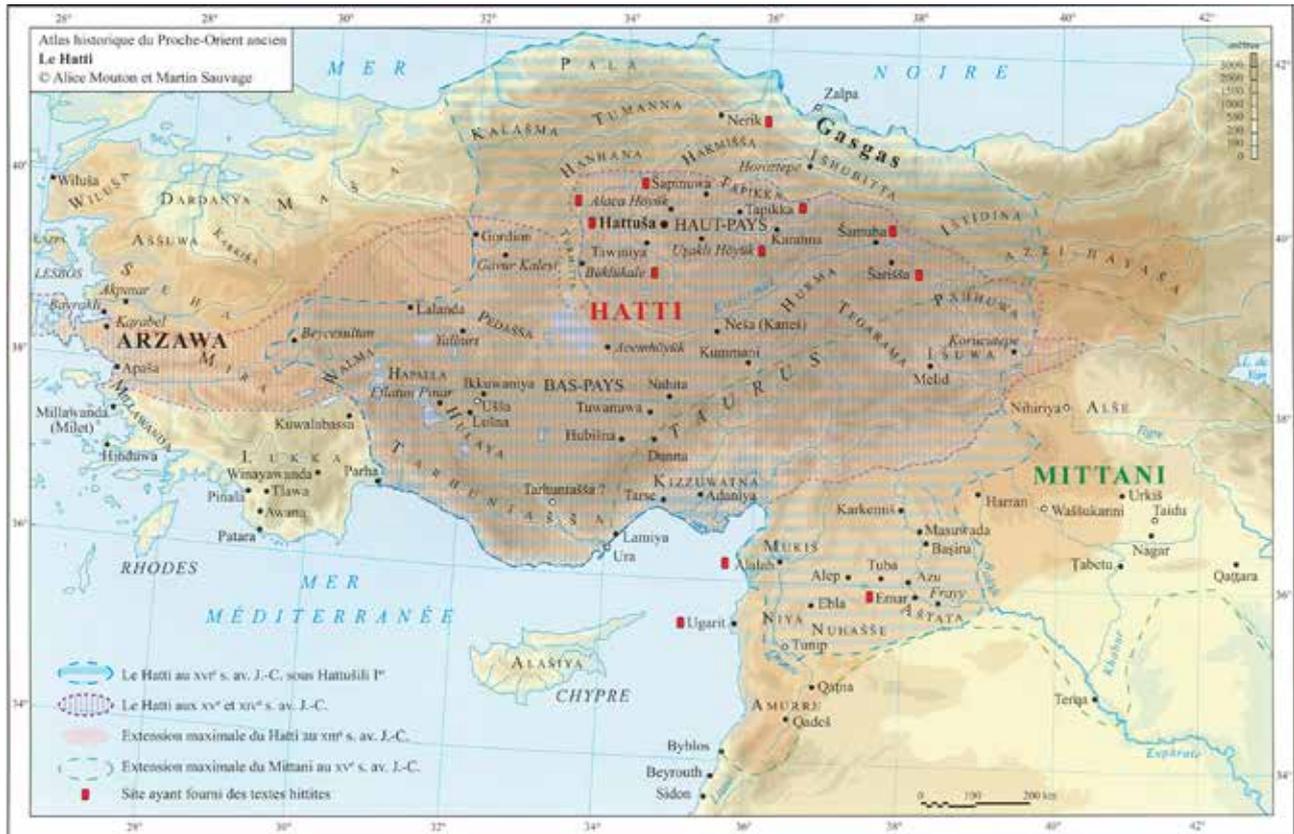
Fig. 1. Map of Hittite Anatolia. © Alice Mouton & Martin Sauvage.

deity. This is the case in the text of a ritual against an evil bee. Animals are sacrificed in a fragmentary passage of the text, and then we read:

> **Excerpt 1:** They eat (and) drink. They burn the bones [entire]ly. Then he/she (i.e. the unknown ritual expert) collects them. He/she goes and leaves them behind into the watercourse. He/she says: "As soon as this (is) burnt, the watercourse will carry it (out)." He/she also picks up the (figurine of) the evil tongue (saying): "Let them (i.e. the miasma provoked by the evil tongue) be ash(es) likewise, so that the watercourse will carry them out.[5]

In this sequence, the burning and disposal of the animal bones are mainly used as an analogy for the disposal of the miasma

provoked by the "evil tongue", i.e. the evil speech that the ritual practitioner is trying to neutralize. In this particular case, the burning is not a way to offer the animal parts to a deity.

Similarly, burning an animal can be a way of getting rid of a substitute. The text of a ritual against impurity in the royal couple states, for example:

> **Excerpt 2:** [Wh]en the Old Woman (i.e., the ritual expert) [fin]ishes performing (the preceding rite), hearths [of wo]od (have) already (been) prepared especially (for this occasion) in an uncultivated place; there, they burn [*a piglet*], a sheep, a donkey (and) a puppy. § When the Old Woman finishes [tre]ating (ritually) the king (and) queen, the king (and) queen go to the huts to [b]athe and they bathe. They pour the remnants of the ritual (substitution) into a small pot and they bury it in an uncultivated place.[6]

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[5] KBo 11.10 + ii 7'–13' with duplicate KBo 47.209 + ii 14'–18' (CTH 447; Görke & Melzer 2015, § 15'''): [(*nu ada*)]*nzi akuwanzi haštai=ma* (dupl. [*h*]*ašdai(=)*[...]) [*arh*]*a warnuwanzi n=at šarā* [(*d*)]*āi n=at paizzi* I₇-*i* EGIR-*an tarnai nu kiššan memai kī mahhan urinan n=at* I₇-*aš pēdai* HUL-*un=(n)a* (dupl. *ida*[*lun=(n)a*]) EME-*an šarā dāi n=aš QĀTAMMA hāš kišaru n=at* I₇-*aš parā pēdai.* A similar sequence also occurs in § 26'''.

[6] KUB 58.83 ii 6–15 and duplicates Bo 3505 Obv. 2'–4' and IBoT 3.114 i 1'–2' (CTH 418; Popko 1991, 46 and García Trabazo & Grod- dek 2005, 214–215): [GIM]-*an=ma=kan* ᴹᵁⁿᵁˢŠU.GI *aniyauwanzi* [*āšš*]*anuzzi arhayan=ma dammeli pe*[*d*]*i* [*ŠA* GI]Š-*ŠI* GUNNIᴹᴱˢ *karū handanteš* [ŠAH.TUR?] UDU ANŠE UR.TUR *apiya warnuwanzi* §

This excerpt seems to relate the cremation of the animals with the ritual treatment of the royal couple, for it is directly followed by a royal cleansing. Furthermore, the piglet, the donkey, and the puppy are most often used as substitutes in Hittite rituals. In this context, the animal substitutes do not seem to be offered to a particular deity. In contrast (see below), we will examine texts in which burnt animals combine the function of substitutes with that of sacrificial victims. Although the text is vague, by "remnants of the ritual" (Hittite *kuptar*), it might designate the remnants of the burnt animals. Their burying into the ground confirms their function as substitutes, for such a disposal technique is widespread in Hittite ritual texts.[7]

Hurrian *ambašše*

In Kizzuwatnean contexts (Southern Anatolia), burnt sacrifice is called *ambašše*.[8] The Hurrian term *ambašše* most certainly means "(something) that is burnt", as it can be interpreted as *amb=a=šše*, where *amb-* is the verb "to burn" and *-a=šše* might be a nominalizing suffix.[9] Moreover, the fact that the *ambašše* sacrifice consists of a burnt offering is attested, among other texts, by a passage of a text describing the Kizzuwatnean *hišuwa*-festival, in which we read:

> **Excerpt 3:** [When My Sun[10] hi]mself leaves, he burns horses (as) an [*ambašš*]*e*-sacrifice to the deity, and he sacrifices [eight sheep an]d [one cow] for his health.[11]

In the light of a passage of a text relating to the cult of the city of Nerik, we also understand that the Hurrian term *ambašše*

designates both the burnt sacrifice and the place or, rather, the burning device (a movable hearth) where such a sacrifice occurs:[12]

> **Excerpt 4:** When the evening comes, the *šankunni*-priests (and) the *haruspex* go down. They set up an *ambašše*-sacrifice in the (precinct of the) *dahanga*-temple, (i.e.) they burn entirely the consecrated meat cuts. Let them always burn (the consecrated meat) on top of the *ambašše*-sacrificial hearth that they have built according to the palace('s orders). However, they should not go near the *dahanga*-temple (itself).[13]

This excerpt presents several philological difficulties. First, the text does not specify what is meant by "in/near the *dahanga*-temple". I suspect, in the first occurrence, a very generic acceptation of the term for designating the precinct of that temple as a whole. This interpretation presents the advantage of being compatible with the second occurrence of the temple name, where the text seems, on the contrary, to refer to the building of the *dahanga*-sanctuary itself. The second philological difficulty of this excerpt lies in the use of the verbal form *ueter*, which has been understood in two different ways. Some researchers[14] have considered it to be a form of the Hittite verb *wida-*, *weda(i)-*, "to bring", whereas others[15] have seen the verb *weda-*, *wet(e)-*, "to build". Both verbs indeed take a 3rd pers. pl. pret. in *u/weter* according to Ünal's dictionary.[16] However, *ueter* is most frequently used in the Hittite texts to mean "they built", whereas its use for representing the verb "to bring" seems much rarer, as far as I can see. Alwin Kloekhorst does not even mention *ueter* in his list of forms of *wida-*, *weda-*.[17] This excerpt also illustrates the possibility of burning the *šuppa*, i.e. the consecrated meat cuts instead of the whole animal.

Another testimony of the ambivalence of the Hurrian noun *ambašše* is an excerpt of an oracular report:

> **Excerpt 5:** As they wrote to me from the palace about the matter of a sacrilege, it was determined by oracle (that

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[*n=ašt*]*a* GIM-*an* MUNUSŠU.GI LUGAL MUNUS.LUGAL [*an*]*iyauwanzi āššanuzi* [*nu=za=ka*]*n* LUGAL MUNUS.LUGAL GIŠZA.LAM.GAR-*aš* [*w*]*arpūwanzi pānzi nu=za warpanzi* [(*n*)]*=ašta kuptar ANA* DUGÚTUL TUR *anda lahūwānzi* [(*n*)]*=an dammeli pedi hariyanzi*. At [*w*]*arpūwanzi*, the scribe mistakenly used a NU sign instead of a U sign, thus writing [*w*]*a-ar-pu-nu*(sic!)*-wa-an-zi*, as if he was confused between a form of *warpu-* "to bathe" and one of *warnu-* "to burn" (a verb that he had written in the previous paragraph!).

[7] Mouton 2019.

[8] See also Strauß 2006, 113–118. The *ambašše* burnt sacrifice includes also foodstuffs, such as bread, flour, honey, etc.; see Haas 1994, 664.

[9] Laroche 1968, 455. The *-a* could be the mark of intransitivity, according to Schwemer 1995, 85. For this Hurrian term, see also *HW²* A, 68–69.

[10] "My Sun" is the most usual title of the Hittite Great King.

[11] KBo 34.235 iii 6'–8', restored thanks to parallel KBo 42.75:3'–5' (CTH 628; Wegner 2002, 95): [*mān* DUTU-*ŠI a*]*pāšila paizzi nu ANA* DINGIR-*LIM* ANŠE.KUR.RAHÁ (var. ANŠE.KUR.RA) [*ambašš*]*e warāni* keld(i)=i=a=*ma=kan* [8 UDUHÁ 1 GU₄ÁB=*y*]*a šipanti*. For this analysis of Hurrian *keld(i)=i=a* as *keldi* + *-i* the possessive pronoun of the 3rd pers. sg. + *-a* of the essive, see Haas & Wilhelm 1974, 133–134. For a possible identification between the double sacrificial ritual *ambašše* and *keldi* with West Semitic designations, see Schwemer 1995.

[12] *Pace* Haas 1994, 661 and *HED* A, 49. The *ambašše*-sacrificial device can be "raised" (*karp-*) or "lowered down" (see below).

[13] KUB 56.49 i 6'–12' and duplicates KUB 56.49 ii 3–9 and KBo 2.4 iii 1'–7' (CTH 672; Součková 2010, 290; Tischler 2016, 89; *CHD* Š, 415): *mahhan=ma nekuza mehur tiyazi nu=kan* LÚ.MEŠSANGA LÚHAL *katta* [(*p*)]*ānzi nu INA* NA₄*dahanga* am.-*ši-in harpanzi šuppa arha warnuwanzi* am.-*ši-in=ma IŠTU* É.GAL-*LIM kuin* (dupl. am.-*ši-in=ma k*[*ui*] *n* [(*I*)]*ŠTU* É.GAL-*LIM*) *ueter nu=kan apēdani šer warnuškandu ANA* <<NA₄>> NA₄*dahanga=ma=at maninkuwan lē pānzi*.

[14] *HW²* A, 68; *HED* A, 49; Součková 2010, 283; Lamante 2014, 439.

[15] Haas 1970, 293; *CHD* Š, 415, and myself in the present paper.

[16] Ünal 2007, 803 and 805.

[17] Kloekhorst 2008, 1009.

it was) a sacrilege (perpetrated) in the temple of Ištar of Niniveh, so that we have interrogated the men of (that) temple. They (said): "A dog went up to the porch and reached the *ambašše*-sacrificial hearths. They killed it in the porch itself." Is it because of that that you, deity, are angr[y]?[18]

In the light of these last two testimonies, it appears that *ambašše* designates both the burnt sacrifice and the burning device upon which such a sacrifice occurs.

Places of burnt animal sacrifice

Excerpts 4 and **5** show that the *ambašše* burnt sacrifice usually occurs inside the sacred section of a temple. **Excerpt 5** specifies that the porch of the temple is an appropriate place for it. However, according to the text of Ammihatna, Tulbi and Mati's purification ritual of a temple, that location might vary according to the context and probably also according to its function:

> **Excerpt 6:** Afterward, they consecrate (again) the deity with water of purification: § they sprinkle (it on) the temple. § Afterward, they burn two big birds before the door of the temple for his (i.e. probably the person responsible for the temple's profanation) offence (and) his fault. § Two big birds inside (of the temple): they burn (them) inside the temple for his (i.e. the deity's) *tuwandihi* (and) his pacification. § One lamb. They burn (it) inside the temple for his health (and as) an *ambašše* burnt sacrifice. § They sacrifice one sheep for his health.[19]

If the translation of the Hurrian terms is correct, the text seems to make a distinction between the burnt sacrifices made for the benefit of the deity whose temple has been profaned

and those made for neutralizing the profanation itself. Indeed, the first two birds are burnt at the door of the temple because of the profaner ("for his offence [and] his fault"), whereas the next two birds are burnt inside the temple for pacifying the defiled deity ("for his *tuwandihi* [and] his pacification"). The lamb that is also burnt inside the temple might be for the deity's recovery ("for his health [and as] an *ambašše* burnt sacrifice").

As we have already seen in the previous section, the area of the porch of the temple seems to be one of the adequate places to set the *ambašše*-sacrificial hearth, as the following passage of a Kizzuwatnean festival text also shows:

> **Excerpt 7:** The king dedicates to the Storm-god one bull, one calf [and] one sheep (as) an *ambašše* burnt sacrifice. They burn the calf and the sheep in front of the Storm-god, but they burn the bull in the porch of the Storm-god.[20]

One could wonder whether the greater proximity of the calf and the sheep to the image of the Storm-god implies a greater degree of sacrality of those sacrificial victims. If not, the change of location of the burnt sacrifice of the bull, the traditional animal-attribute of the Storm-gods, is probably meaningful in one way or another. Although the text does not provide any clues, it might have something to do with the size of the animal to incinerate.

Entire or in bits?

Until now, we have mostly looked at whole animals being burnt in sacrifice to the gods. The text of Pāpanikri's birth ritual from Kizzuwatna shows a different procedure:

> **Excerpt 8:** Afterward, the *patili*-ritual practitioner takes one big bird, one big bowl of *šampukki*-stew, three loaves of *harašpawant*-bread (and) one loaf of *aladdari*-bread of half a handful. Then he dedicates (them) to the Storm-god for her[21] health and her prostration. He removes the heart of the bird and throws it into the fire. (Then) he puts all (of it; i.e. the heartless carcass of the bird?) back (in front of) the Storm-god.[22]

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[18] KUB 5.10 + Obv. 19–23 (CTH 567; partially in Wegner 1981, 140–141): *IŠTU* É.GAL-*LIM=ma=mu* kuit INIM *maršaštarraš hatrāer INA* É.DINGIR-*LIM* ᴰ*IŠTAR* ᵁᴿᵁ*Ninuwa=kan maršaštarriš* SIxSÁ-*at nu* LÚᴹᴱˢ É.DINGIR-*LIM punuššūēn UMMA ŠUNU=(M)MA* UR.GI₇*=wa=kan* ᴱ*hilamni* UGU *pait nu=war=aš ambaššiyaš kattan āraš n=an=kan* ŠÀ ᴱ*hilamni=pat kuēnnir* DINGIR-*LUM=za apaddan šer* TUKU.TUKU-*uwa[nza]*.

[19] KBo 23.1 + ii 4–16 and duplicates KUB 30.38 + iv 23–37 and Bo 3964 iv 1' (CTH 472; Strauß 2014, § 27–34 and Miller 2009, 150): EGIR-*anda=ma* DINGIR-*LAM šehelliyaš uetenit* (dupl. *uitinit*) *šuppiyahhanzi* § É.DINGIR-*LIM=ya papparaššanzi* § EGIR-*anda=ma* 2 MUŠEN. GAL *ŠA* É.DINGIR-*LIM* KÁ-*aš peran* parl(i)=i=a arn(i)=i=a *warnuanzi* (dupl. *wahnuwa[nzi]*!) § 2 MUŠEN.GAL*=ma=kan andurza INA* É.DINGIR-*LIM=kan anda* tuwandih(i)=i=a enumašš(i)=i=a *warnuanzi* (dupl. [*w*]*arnuwanzi*) § (dupl. § omis) 1 SILA₄*=ma INA* É.DINGIR-*LIM=kan anda* keld(i)=i=a *ambašše warnuanzi* (dupl. *warnuwanzi*) § 1 UDU *ANA* keld(i)=i=a *šipandanzi* (dupl. BAL-[*an*]*zi*).

[20] KUB 41.48 iii 10'–15' (CTH 705; Haas 1998, 139): *n=ašta* LUGAL-*uš* 1 GU₄.MAH 1 AMAR 1 UDU=[*ya*] *ANA* ᴰU *ambašši šipanti nu* 1 AMAR 1 UDU*=ya PANI* ᴰIM *warnuwanzi* GU₄.MAH*=ma=kan ŠA* ᴰIM ᴱ*hilamni anda warnuwanzi*.

[21] For the pregnant woman who is the ritual patron.

[22] KBo 5.1 iii 10–16 (CTH 476; Mouton 2016, 272–273, § 27): EGIR-*pa=ma=z* ᴸᵁ*patiliš* 1 MUŠEN.GAL 1 ᴰᵁᴳDÍLIM.GAL ᵀᵁ⁷*šampukkiyaš* 3 ᴺᴵᴺᴰᴬ*harašpauwanduš* 1 ᴺᴵᴺᴰᴬ<*a*>*laddarin ŠA* ½ UPNI *dāi nu ANA* ᴰIM keld(i)=i=a kunz=ag=ašš(e)=i=a *šipanti n=ašta ANA* MUŠEN

The text does not explain why the ritual expert has to remove and throw the bird's heart into the fire. Although probable, the sacrificial character of such a gesture remains ambiguous, because of the use of the verb *peššiya-* "to throw". Note, however, that *peššiya-* is found in connection to an animal sacrifice in the text of a ritual to the divine Heptad, for example:

Excerpt 9: The AZU ritual practitioner holds a kid-goat forward. Whoever stands in front (of the kid-goat) dedicates it. § The AZU ritual practitioner strikes the kid-goat's neck with a stick and then he kills it. He throws it onto the grill.[23]

In the light of this excerpt, it seems that the act of throwing an animal or one of its body parts into the fire/onto the grill (Hittite *happina-*) is a way of sacrificing it. There is a proximity between such an act and the well-known act of cooking sacrificial meat on the grill. This excerpt shows that the distinction between burning and cooking a sacrificial animal is not always clear.

Animal fat is often burnt during the ceremonies. Here is an example in a fragmentary ritual text:

Excerpt 10: The sheep fat of […] burns on the grill […].[24]

This passage can be compared with a mention that occurs here and there in the religious texts, such as in the following text of a ritual for the Sungoddess of the earth:

Excerpt 11: They bring one sheep. The Old Woman dedicates it to the Sungoddess of the earth, and they slaughter it into a pit. They let the blood flow down into (the pit). § Afterward, they bring one billy goat. The Old Woman dedicates it to the Sungoddess of the earth and to the male deities, and they slaughter it into the pit. They let the blood flow down into (the pit). § Then, they cut them (i.e., the sheep and the billy goat) up together with (their) heads (and) feet. While the fat is being cooked, the people dig (another) pit.[25]

Once more cooking and burning the animal fat seem almost interchangeable. The text of a Kizzuwatnean ritual for settling the goddess of the night in a new temple mentions a similar event, with an interesting specification:

Excerpt 12: The fat (of the sacrificed sheep) burns out; no one eats it.[26]

This passage seems to indicate that, in this particular context, the sheep's fat is supposed to be consumed only by the goddess, as no human participant is allowed to partake in it. A fragment of a ritual text shows that the skin and the bones of a sacrificial animal can also be burnt:

Excerpt 13: [*Afterwar*]d, they place the bones and the skin (of) the lamb in one single place [and l]ater they burn (them) entirely.[27]

Just like in the case of **Excerpt 8**, one can wonder whether this passage actually describes a burnt sacrifice. This shows that the texts are not always explicit about the ritual function of burning animals or animal body parts.

Ritual contexts

Although the texts do not always allow us to determine the ritual function of burning an animal or its body parts, we can sometimes observe the ritual contexts in which such burning sequences occur.

INVOCATION RITUALS

In the sequence of a Kizzuwatnean invocation ritual for a group of deities, we read:

Excerpt 14: When they are finished (with the previous rite), they lift the deities and they place them there, at the location of the watercourses. He (i.e., the ritual expert) burns two birds and nine loaves of thin bread (as) an *ambašše* burnt sacrifice to the nine watercourses. He sacrifices also three birds and nine loaves of thin bread for his[28] health. Then he pours all (of it) into (the watercourses) in the same way (as before) and he makes a libation. He makes also a libation to the male deities in the same way. They draw paths of barley purée in the same way, they

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UZUŠÀ *šarā dāi* n=at=šan IZI *peššiyazi huma(n)=(š)šan* EGIR-*pa ANA* DIM *dāi*.
23 KUB 9.28 ii 11'–16' (CTH 442): MÁŠ.TUR LÚAZU *parā ēpzi nu hānza kuiš arta* n=an=kan *šipanti* § LÚAZU *ŠA* MÁŠ.TUR GÚ=*ŠU* GIŠ-*ruit walahzi* n=an=kan *kuinzi* n=an *anda happina piššiyaizzi*.
24 KBo 55.84 i 10–11 (CTH 470): […]-*yaš* UZUÌ.UDU […] *happini urāni*.
25 KUB 55.45 + ii 4–11 (CTH 448): *nu* 1 UDU *ūnniyanzi* n=an=kan MUNUSŠU.GI *taknaš* DUTU-*i šipanti* n=an=kan ÉSAG-*ni kattanta hattanzi nu=kan ēšhar kattanda tarnanzi* § EGIR-*anda=ma* 1 MÁŠ.GAL *ūnniyanzi* n=an=kan MUNUSŠU.GI *taknaš* DUTU-*i* DINGIRMEŠ. LÚMEŠ=*ya šipanti* n=an=kan ÉSAG-*ni kattanta haddanzi nu=kan ēšhar kattanda tarnanzi* § *namma=aš=kan QĀDU* SAG.DUMEŠ GÌRMEŠ *markanzi nu kuitman* UZUÌ *zeyari* ÉRIN.MEŠ=*az=ma* ÉSAG *paddāi*.

26 KUB 29.4 iv 40–41 (CTH 481; Mouton 2016, 372–373, § 33): UZUÌ=*ma arha warāni UL=at kuiški ēzzazzi*.
27 KBo 13.164 iv 1–2 (CTH 470): [EGIR-*p*]*a*?-*ma haštai* KUŠ SILA₄=*ya* 1-*edani pēdi tianzi* [*nu a*]*ppezziyan arha warnuwanzi*.
28 Probably the ritual patron's health.

break loaves of thin bread on top (of them) (dupl. adds: 'and they make a libation [on it] too'). Then they invoke the deities through the watercourses.[29]

In this passage, the *ambašše* sacrifice of birds and bread is addressed to the watercourses that will serve as pathways to attract the deities the ritual expert invokes.[30] The burnt sacrifice is not only performed in honor of those watercourses, its remains are also poured into the watercourses, to make sure that they reach the invoked deities. **Excerpt 1** also described a watercourse as a vehicle of burnt animal parts, although differently: only the bones were used, whereas the whole burnt animals seem to be thrown into the water in **Excerpt 14**.

The text of another Kizzuwatnean ritual states:

Excerpt 15: They open an *āpi*-pit. Then, he (i.e., the ritual expert) sacrifices one big bird for smearing (its) blood onto the *āpi*-pit. § [Afterw]ard, he burns one big bird, three loaves of thin bread, plant oil, honey and a little bit of wine into the *āpi*-pit. Afterward, he sacrifices one big bird, three loaves of thin bread, plant oil, honey and a little bit of wine into the *āpi*-pit for his[31] health. Afterward, he breaks seven loaves of thin bread (over) the *āpi*-pit and then he throws them into the *āpi*-pit. He also makes a libation of wine into the *āpi*-pit afterward. § Afterward, he takes a little bit of fine oil, and red wool is deposited inside (the *āpi*-pit), so that he invokes the deity from the *āpi*-pit.[32]

The act consisting of smearing animal blood on a ritual place or item is a Kizzuwatnean ritual technique for consecrating that place or item.[33] The *āpi*-pit serves as a receptacle of a burnt sacrifice composed of a bird and other foodstuffs. The cremation itself occurs inside the pit. The latter functions as an access to the beyond.[34] The path itself goes through the pit. It is materialized by the red wool and the fine oil placed inside the pit, so that the invoked deity can come out of the pit into the realm of the human beings. Just like in **Excerpt 14**, the burnt sacrifice is physically placed on the path through which the deity is attracted. This probably illustrates the attractive character of such a sacrifice, although an unburnt sacrifice would also function in the same way.[35]

Burning items, and not only offerings, is also a way to send them to the beyond, as is shown in several passages of the text of the Hittite royal funerary ritual. Here is one of these passages:

Excerpt 16: They smash [the vessel of bee]r (and) the vessel of wine[36] and, at that place, they burn the hoe (and) the spade.[37] They collect the ashes and they pou[r] them where the heads of the horses (and) [the heads] of the oxen have been burnt.[38]

The items and the animal heads that are being burnt probably represent the equipment (agricultural tools, ride, and cattle) that the deceased king or queen will need in his or her new resting place, a place called "the meadow" in the text. Just like the royal body has been cremated on the first day of the funerary ritual, these items are burnt, so that they can join the deceased on his or her voyage. The fact that the (heads of) the horses and oxen accompany the deceased to "the meadow" is explicitly expressed a bit further in the text:

Excerpt 17: May the oxen and sheep, the horses (and) mules graze in this meadow for him/her![39]

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[29] KUB 15.31 iii 56–65 and duplicate KUB 15.32 + iv 14–21 (CTH 484; Fuscagni 2016, § 22'): *nu mahhan zinnanzi nu* DINGIR^MEŠ *šarā karpanzi n=aš apiya=pat* I₇^MEŠ-*aš pēdi tienzi* (dupl. [*t*]*ian*[*zi*]) *nu ANA* 9 I₇^MEŠ 2 MUŠEN (dupl. 2 MUŠEN^HÁ) 9 NINDA.SIG^MEŠ=*ya ambašše warāni keld(i)=i=a=ya* 3 MUŠEN (dupl. 3 MUŠEN^HÁ) 9 NINDA.SIG^MEŠ=*ya šipanti anda=ya=kan hūman QĀTAMMA išhūwāi* (dupl. *išhuwai*) *šipanti=ya* DINGIR^MEŠ.LÚ^MEŠ=*ya=*(*š*)*šan QĀTAMMA šipanti ŠA* BA.BA.ZA=*ya* KASKAL^MEŠ *QĀTAMMA hūittiyanzi* (dupl. *hūittiyazi*) *nu=*(*š*)*ša*<*n*> NINDA.SIG^MEŠ *paršiyanzi* (dupl. adds: *šipan*[*d*]*anzi*) *nu* DINGIR^MEŠ I₇^MEŠ-*az hūittiyanzi* (dupl. *huittiyanzi*).

[30] Concerning watercourses as pathways into the divine realm, see also Erbil & Mouton 2012.

[31] For the ritual patron.

[32] KBo 24.45 + Rev. 11–17 and duplicates KBo 27.202 + iii 8'–18' and KBo 59-52:6'–7' (CTH 479; Ünal 2017, § 13'–14'): *nu āpi kinuanzi* (dupl. *kinuwanzi*) *namma āpiti ēšharnumāuwanzi* 1 MUŠEN.GAL *šipanti* (dupl. BAL-*an*[*ti*]) § [EGIR-*Š*]*U=ma āpiti ambašše* 1 MUŠEN.GAL 3 NINDA.SIG Ì.GIŠ LÀL GEŠTIN=*ya tepu warāni* EGIR=*ŠU=ma āpiti keld(i)=i=a* 1 MUŠEN.GAL 3 NINDA.SIG Ì.GIŠ LÀL GEŠTIN=*ya tepu šipanti* EGIR=*ŠU=ma āpiti* 7 NINDA.SIG *paršiya n=at=kan āpiti kattanda išhuwai* (dupl. *išhuwa*[*i*]) GEŠTIN=*ya=kan* EGIR-*anda āpiti anda šipanti* § EGIR=*ŠU=ma=za* Ì.DÙG.GA *tepu dāi anda=ma=kan* SÍG SA₅ *kittari n=ašta* DINGIR-*LAM āpitaz huittiyazi*.

[33] Mouton 2014a.

[34] See Mouton 2019.

[35] Mouton 2019.

[36] These vessels were probably emptied earlier in the ritual.

[37] The same items plated with silver are mentioned earlier in the text.

[38] KUB 34.65 + i 28''–30'' and duplicate KUB 39.36 + i 4''–7'' (CTH 450; Kassian *et al.* 2002, 380–381): [DUG KA(Š D)]UG GEŠTIN *arha duwarnanzi* (dupl. *duwarnia*[*nzi*]) ^GIŠAL=*ma* ^GIŠMAR *a*[(*pēdani pēdi w*)]*arnūwanzi* (dupl. *warnuwan*[*zi*]) SAHAR^HÁ-*uš=ma šarā danzi* (dupl. *dānzi*) *nu* ŠA[(G.DU^MEŠ ANŠE.KUR.RA^MEŠ) SAG.DU]^MEŠ GU₄^MEŠ *kuwapi warandat* (dupl. *warantat*) *n=uš apiya išhūw*[*anzi*].

[39] KUB 30.24 + ii 3–4 (Kassian *et al.* 2002, 384–385): *nu=wa=*(*š*)*ši=kan kēdani ANA* Ú.SAL GU₄^HÁ UDU^HÁ=*ya* ANŠE.KUR.RA^MEŠ ANŠE.GÌR.NUN.NA^HÁ *ušeddu*.

SUBSTITUTION

The relationship between burnt sacrifice and substitution rites is illustrated by several Hittite texts. Those texts show that an animal substitute might at the same time serve as a burnt sacrificial victim.[40] This seems to be the case in the following passage from the text of Maštigga's ritual against family quarrels:

Excerpt 18: They bring a black sheep. The Old Woman *holds* it over them (i.e. the patients) and says: "For your heads (and) your whole persons, the substitute (is) a black sheep. The curses also (are) behind (its) mouth (and) tongue!" § She *waves* it over them. The two ritual patrons spit into its mouth, and then they slaughter the sheep. Then, they dismember it. They make a hearth and they burn it entirely. They also pour honey and virgin olive oil on top of it. She br[ea]ks a loaf of sweet bread and she throws it into the hearth. She also pours a libation of wine.[41]

The "holding/waving" of a sheep "over" the patients might either be a symbolic gesture or a mistaken translation into Hittite of a Hurrian or Luwian expression.[42] Although the black sheep is explicitly designated as the substitute of the patients, it might serve as a sacrificial victim at the same time. Indeed, honey and olive oil are poured on top of its burning corpse and the hearth in which the latter is burning also receives bread, thus giving a sacrificial aura to this scene.

In the text of Muršili's aphasia, a substitution ritual is performed in order to cure the Great King:

Excerpt 19: As soon as they bring the ox-substitute, the way the rite of the ox-substitute (is) inscribed on the old wooden tablet and the way the instruction(s are) made for it, (i.e.) the way the rite of the *ambašše* burnt sacrifice (and that) for his health (are) performed for the deity according to the old wooden tablet, they perform them in the same way. However, if the ox-substitute dies on the way back because the trip (was) long, as soon as they [arrive] there, from there they lead another ox-substitute (that is) ador[ned] with ornaments, so that they burn

(those) other ornaments (together) with that [*other*] ox-substitute.[43]

The text seems to indicate that the prescribed *ambašše* burnt sacrifice consists of burning the ox-substitute of the Great King together with its ornaments.[44]

The passage of another text of a royal substitution ritual states:

Excerpt 20: 'I have just placed (this) bu[ll] (as) a substitute. [...] of this bull [...]. May the Sun god of heaven se[e] the smoke of this bull!' As he[45] says this, they *hurry* back and they lower [down] the *ambašše*-sacrificial hearth.[46]

Just like in the preceding passage, a close relationship seems to exist between the *ambašše* burnt sacrifice and the substitution rite: the text mentions the "smoke of [the] bull", so that it seems quite certain that the bull-substitute is the one being burnt as an *ambašše* sacrificial victim.

OTHER RITUAL CONTEXTS

Whenever the burnt sacrifice is not performed in the context of an invocation or a substitution ritual, one can find it in other ritual contexts, such as the celebration of a military campaign. This is what the following excerpt from a festival text shows:

Excerpt 21: The (military) campaigns that the king has fought—however many (military) campaigns he has

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[40] Mouton 2014b.

[41] KBo 39.8 ii 35–43 (CTH 404; Mouton 2016, 392–395, § 22–23): *nu* UDU GE₆ *ünnanzi n=an=šamaš=kan* ᴹᵁᴺᵁˢŠU.GI *šer ēpzi nu kiššan memai* SAG₆ᴴᴬ=*ašmaš tueggaš hūmandāš tarpalliš* UDU GE₆ KAxU-*i* EME-*i hŭrtauš=(š)a* EGIR-*an* § *n=an=šamaš=kan šer arha wahnuzi nu=(š)ši=kan* 2 BĒL SÍSKUR *išši anda allapahhanzi nu* UDU *hattanzi namma=an arha happešnānzi nu* GUNNI *iyanzi n=an arha warnuwanzi* LÀL=*ya=(š)ši=kan* Ì SERDU *pittalwan šer lāhuwanzi* NINDA.GUR₄.R[A] KU₇*paršiya n=an=kan hašši peššiyazzi* GEŠTIN=*ya šipanti.*

[42] Miller 2004, 111–112.

[43] KUB 43.50 + Rev. 28'–36' with duplicates KUB 12.31 + Rev. 18'–25' and KBo 4.2 + iv 41–50 (CTH 486; Görke 2015, § 5): [(*mah*)]*han=ma* GU₄ *pūhugarin* (dupl. *puhugarin*) *arn*[[(*uwanzi nu ŠA*)]] GU₄ *pūhugari* GIM-*an* SISKUR *annall*[(*a*)]*z* (dupls. *annalaz*) IŠTU [(ᴳᴵˢLE'U* (dupl. ᴳᴵˢLE'Ē) *gulaš*)]*šan išhiul=(l)a=(š)ši* (dupl. *išhiūl=ši*) GIM-*an* (dupl. [*m*]*ahhan*) *iyan* ANA DINGIR-*LIM=ya* SISKUR (dupl. SÍSKUR) *a*[(*mbašše k*)]*eld*(*i*)=*i*=*a annallaz* IŠTU ᴳᴵˢLE'U (dupl. *annalaz* IŠTU ᴳᴵˢLE'Ē) GIM-*an* (dupl. ᴳᴵˢLĒ'E mahhan*) [(*iyan n=a*)]*t* QĀTAMMA *ēššanzi mān* GU₄ *pūhugariš*=[(*ma* EGIR.KASKA)]L-*ni* (dupl. EGIR.KASKAL) *aki* KASKAL-*aš kuit tūwa n=at* GIM-*an* (dupl. *mahhan*) *apēya* (dupl. *apiya*) [...-*a*]*nzi nu tamain* GU₄ *pūhugarin apez=(z)a* (dupl. *apēz=(z)a*) [*u*]*našhaz* (dupl. *apēz unuwašhaza*) *un*[*uwand*]*an nannanzi nu tamau*[*š* (dupls. *apūš*) (*u*)]*našhuš* x x x[... *ap*]*ēdani* ITTI GU₄ *pūhug*[(*ari wa*)]*rnuwanzi.*

[44] Concerning the adornment of (animal) substitutes, see Mouton 2014b.

[45] The king who is the ritual patron.

[46] KBo 15.7:7'-11' (CTH 420; Kümmel 1967, 36): *nu=wa=za kāša* GU₄.MAH ᴸ]ᵁ*tarpallin tehhun n*[*u=wa*] *kēl ŠA* GU₄.MAH x[...] *hhuwain=ma=wa kēl Š*[*A*] GU₄.MAH ᴰUTU AN-*E auš*[*du n*]*u* GIM-*an kī memai nu* EGIR-*p*[*a*] *parhanzi nu am.-šin* [*kattan t*]*arnanzi.* My restoration of the last sentence is based on the parallel excerpt appearing in KBo 53.93 ii 4 (HED A, 49). It alludes to the movable character of the *ambašše*-sacrificial hearth.

fought—(during) the years that went by in the meantime (and) until he celebrates the deity, they make an oracular inquiry concerning the *ambašše* and the *keldi* rites, as well as the *malte*ššar-recitations (to perform) for those (military) campaigns. As it has been determined for him, he will make the *ambašše* burnt sacrifice in the ancient *ambašše*-sacrificial hearth.[47]

The precise function(s) of the *ambašše* sacrifice is not specified by the text. It could be intended either for purifying the king after battle or as a thanksgiving to the gods after his victories.

The following excerpt comes from a fragmentary text describing a cultic festival in the Hattian city of Zippalanda:

> **Excerpt 22:** They have lit big torches in front of the deity. The deity arrives at the gate. The lord[48] dedicates one bull (and) one billy goat to the Stormgod of the city of Zippalanda. They burn them entirely in the fashion of the city of Hattuša. § At the same time, the chief of the royal bodyguards and the chief of the palace officials pronounce the following word(s): "If (you), Stormgod of Zippalanda, are somehow *vengeful* (and) your divine forehead is [...] upward, we have just burnt your anger and [we have ...] your divine forehead, Stormgod of Zippa[landa]." § Around the *ambašše* burnt sacrifice, [he] pours a lib[ation] of "beer-wine".[49]

This excerpt attests to the adoption of the Kizzuwatnean *ambašše* burnt sacrifice in Central Anatolia: it is described as being conducted "in the fashion of Hattuša".[50] One can also note the symbolic significance that the incantation attributes to that sacrifice: by burning those animal victims, the human protagonists burn away the divine recipient's anger. Burning

a god's anger is a *topos* that one finds in Hattian mythological narratives,[51] but its comparison with an *ambašše* burnt sacrifice is clearly an *ad hoc bricolage*.

Final remarks

Through this overview, it appears that sheep, oxen, goats, birds, and horses could be burnt as sacrificial victims in Hittite Anatolia (see *Table 1*). One notes the particular connection that seems to exist, in **Excerpts 3** and **16–17**, between the burnt sacrifice of horses and the royal character of the religious event. The cremation itself is performed by the ritual practitioner (the Old Woman, the AZU ritual expert, *šankunni*-priests, etc.) or by the ritual patron (the king), although I suspect that, in the latter case, the ritual patron does not actually perform the cremation, but rather dedicates the sacrificial victim before its cremation. The texts in which the ritual patron is said to be the actor of the cremation (**Excerpts 3** and **21**) probably summarize a more complex sequence. **Excerpts 7**, **20** and **22** in fact illustrate that the ritual patron is the one who dedicates the animal before it is burnt, not the one who does the burning. Similarly, the ritual patron is not responsible for the slaughter of a sacrificial victim, but only for its dedication to the divine recipient(s).[52]

The Kizzuwatnean *ambašše* sacrificial technique predominates in the textual evidence for burnt animal sacrifice in Hittite Anatolia. This is expected, for the ritual texts relating to the Kizzuwatnean tradition are themselves predominant in the Hittite documentation. Although the use of fire as a vehicle to send foodstuffs and items to the other world seems to have originally been a Kizzuwatnean particularity within Hittite Anatolia,[53] several texts provide witness to the adoption of the *ambašše* burnt sacrifice in the heart of the Hittite kingdom. A reinterpretation of this rite as the burning of a god's anger (**Excerpt 22**) illustrates one of the ways this "provincial" technique was inserted and combined with preexisting Central Anatolian traditions.[54]

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[47] KUB 27.1 i 7–12 (CTH 712; Wegner 1995, 32): LUGAL-*uš=ma kuieš gimriuš lahhešket nu mašieš gimruš lahhiyan harzi ištarna=kan kuieš* MU^HÁ *panteš kuitman=za* DINGIR-*LIM iyazi nu=za apēdaš gimraš šer* SISKUR *ambaššin keldian=(n)a malteššar=(r)a ariyanzi nu=(š)ši kuit* SIxSÁ-*ri nu=kan ambaššin annalli ambašši anda šipanti.*

[48] The human patron of the ceremony, i.e. the king.

[49] KUB 20.96 iv 1–15 (CTH 635; Groddek 2004, 166–167 and *CHD* Š, 268): ^GIŠ*zuppari*^HÁ GAL^HÁ *šiuni peran lukkan harkanzi* DINGIR-*LUM=kan* KÁ.GAL-*na šarā ari t=ašta* BĒLU 1 GU₄.MAH 1 UDU. ŠIR *ANA* ^D U ^URU*Zipalanda šipanti t=aš* ^URU*Hattušaš iwar arha warnuwanzi* § GAL *MEŠEDI=kan* GAL DUMU^MEŠ É.GAL=*ya memian anda kiššan memanzi mān=wa=za* ^D U ^URU*Zipalanda kuitki šarkiwališ šiunaš hanza=tit šarā* [...] *kāša=wa=(t)ta kartimmiya[ttan] warnummen nu=wa* ^D U ^URU*Zipa[landa] šiunaš hanza=(t)tit arha* [...] § *ambašši arahzanda* KAŠ.GEŠTIN *ši[panti].*

[50] Bo 5045 ii 6'–7' and KUB 44.33 i 8–9 also mention a burnt sacrifice in the fashion of Hattuša in fragmentary contexts, see Fuscagni 2007, 95 and Popko 1994, 232. These three fragments belong to the same composition, CTH 635. **Excerpt 19** also clearly illustrates the adoption of the *ambašše* sacrificial technique in Hattuša, as it is used for curing the Hittite Great King.

[51] Mouton 2016, 474–475 § 27".

[52] Mouton 2007, 83–84.

[53] Mouton 2006, 259–261.

[54] About the possible reason for keeping records of "provincial rituals" in the royal court of Hattuša, see Mouton 2016, 44–45. About the adoption of Kizzuwatnean religious features in the Hittite heartland, see, for instance, Strauß 2006, 9–11.

Table 1. Animal species and ritual contexts of burnt sacrifice. MS = Middle Script (15th century–first half of the 14th century BC); NS = New Script (2nd half of 14th century–13th century BC); LNS = Late New Script (end of 13th century–beginning of 12th century BC).

Excerpt no.	Burnt animal	Whole or parts	Who makes the action	Burning place	Ritual context	Cultural origin	Other	Date
1	sheep, ox	bones only	unspecified	unspecified	against evil bee and evil tongue	mixed	burnt bones thrown into the watercourse	NS
2	[*piglet*], sheep, donkey, puppy	whole	unspecified	uncultivated place	royal substitution	mixed	no sacrifice—remnants buried in uncultivated place	LNS
3	horses	whole	"Great King"	unspecified	*ambašše* sacrifice for a deity during a cultic festival	Kizzuwatnean	associated to a banquet	MS
4	[*sheep*]	consecrated meat cuts	*šankunni*-priests and *haruspex*	in the precinct of the *dahanga*-temple of the Storm-god of Nerik	cultic festival of Nerik	mixed	–	LNS
5	unspecified	unspecified	unspecified	porch of the temple of Ištar of Niniveh	cult	mixed	oracular report about a sacrilege	NS
6	birds, lamb	whole	unspecified	door of the temple; inside the temple	*ambašše* sacrifice during purification of a temple	Kizzuwatnean	–	NS
7	bull, calf, sheep	whole	unspecified	in front of the god; at the porch of the temple	*ambašše* sacrifice for the Storm-god during cultic festival	Kizzuwatnean	king dedicates the victims before cremation	NS
8	bird	heart only	*patili*-ritual expert	in the patient's house	purification of a pregnant woman	Kizzuwatnean	sacrifice?	NS
9	kid-goat	whole	AZU ritual expert	unspecified	ritual for the Heptad	Kizzuwatnean	–	LNS
10	sheep	fat only	unspecified	unspecified	purification	unknown	–	NS
11	sheep, billy goat	fat only	unspecified	unspecified	ritual for the Sun-goddess of the earth	mixed	"cooked"	NS
12	sheep	fat only	unspecified	inside the temple	settling the goddess of the night	Kizzuwatnean	"no one eats it"	NS
13	lamb	bones and hide only	unspecified	unspecified	ritual	unknown	sacrifice?	NS
14	birds	whole	ritual expert	by the watercourses	*ambašše* sacrifice to the watercourses during invocation	Kizzuwatnean	burnt birds thrown into the watercourses	NS
15	bird	whole	ritual expert	in the *āpi*-pit	*ambašše* sacrifice during invocation	Kizzuwatnean	burnt sacrifice in the pit through which the deity is being invoked	MS?
16–17	horses, oxen	heads only	unspecified	unspecified	royal funerary ritual	mixed	no sacrifice	LNS
18	black sheep	whole	unspecified	unspecified	against evil tongues within a family	Kizzuwatnean	sheep-substitute and sacrificial victim	LNS
19	ox	whole	unspecified	unspecified	*ambašše* sacrifice during substitution	mixed	ox-substitute for the king and sacrificial victim	MS
20	bull	unspecified	unspecified	unspecified	*ambašše* sacrifice during substitution	mixed	king dedicates the bull as (his) substitute; also sacrificial victim	NS
21	unspecified	unspecified	"king"	unspecified	*ambašše* sacrifice during cultic festival	mixed	after the king's military campaigns	NS
22	bull, billy goat	whole	unspecified	at the gate (of the city/temple?)	*ambašše* sacrifice for the Storm-god of Zippalanda	mixed	"lord" dedicates the bull and billy goat burnt "in the fashion of Hattuša"; compared with burnt anger of the god	NS

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