

“WIPING THE POT CLEAN”: ON COOKING POTS AND POLISHING OPERATIONS IN NEO-ASSYRIAN SOURCES¹

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this paper is to study the profession *kāpir diqāri*, which at present is only attested in two Neo-Assyrian texts. Although the meaning of this compound word has already been understood, an in-depth analysis based on the *kāpir diqāri*'s connections to other professions and cleansing operations in Neo-Assyrian sources has been missing. The study offers an overview on the following three aspects: (1) the relationship of the *kāpir diqāri* with other professions; (2) the use of the verb *kapāru*; (3) the function and characteristics of the *diqāru* pots.

1. THE PROFESSION *KĀPIR DIQĀRI*: INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

The Neo-Assyrian profession *kāpir diqāri* is attested in a royal edict which records the appointment of Nergal-apil-kumu'a as overseer of construction at Kalḫu by Assurnāṣirpal II (883–859).² The duplicate of the edict includes a long penalty-clause-like section listing several professions that are required to observe the king's order in Nergal-apil-kumu'a's favour; among them is also mentioned a worker called *kāpir diqāri*:

[*lu-u* LÚ*.x x x x *lu-u* LÚ*].*ka-pir*–UTÚL.MEŠ *lu-u* LÚ*.MUŠEN.DÙ *lu-ú* LÚ*.MÁ.LAḪ₄ *lu-u* LÚ*.AD.KID, “[or a . . ., or] a *dishwasher*, or a fowler, or a boatman, or a reed-worker.” SAA 12 83 r.11

On the basis of the occurrence of this profession among various types of butchers in a list of professions from Sultantepe,³ LÚ.*ka-pir*–UTÚL.MEŠ⁴ was interpreted in

¹ It is a great pleasure and honour for me to be able to offer this paper to Prof. S. Parpola, whose fundamental contributions to the study of the Neo-Assyrian texts and lexicon also include elucidations on Assyrian professions.

² For the appointment of Nergal-apil-kumu'a (SAA 12 82 = ARRIM 1 13 and duplicates SAA 12 83 = BaM 24 239+, SAA 12 84 = CTN 4 256) see Kataja & Whiting 1995: XXXIV; PNA 2/II: 941b s.v. *Nergal-āpil-kūmū'a*.

³ STT 385 iii 10'. This so-called “practical” Lu-list has been published in MSL 12: 233–237.

⁴ Deller 1965: 471.

CAD as “butcher(?)”, literally “one who trims meat”, that is to say by reading the sign UTÚL as UZU (= *šīru*, “meat”).⁵ Alternatively, CAD also suggested that this profession could have had something to do with the coating of *diqārus* with bitumen, though such a profession would not fit well in the context of the butchers (STT 385 iii 8’–11’).⁶ In AHw, the entry *kāpiru* is generically rendered as “ein Tempelhandwerker(?)”,⁷ while CDA tentatively records both the meaning of “wiper” and that of “caulker”.⁸

The interpretation “butcher” is no longer acceptable since it has been convincingly clarified in SAA 12 83 that the sign referring to the second word of the title can only be read as UTÚL.⁹ CAD connects the etymology of the first word, *ka-pir*, to the verb *kapāru* B, “to strip, clip, to trim down”, while the verb *kapāru* A, “to wipe off, to smear on” is mentioned with reference to the profession *kāpiru* A, “caulker”.¹⁰ There is however no doubt that the first word must derive from the verb *kapāru* G, “to wipe clean, cleanse, polish”,¹¹ and that the object of cleaning is the *diqāru* pots. Even though the meaning of the title is clear, one can note that the translation of *kāpir diqāri* as “dishwasher(?)”, proposed by Kataja and Whiting on the basis of the correctly understood etymology of the compound word, reveals that the editors considered it doubtful, evident from the use of italics (translation) and with question mark (glossary).¹² The Neo-Assyrian *diqāru* was not properly a “dish”, and the action expressed by the verb *kapāru* can be understood meaning “to wash” only in generic terms, as exemplified by the usage of the verbs *mesû* and *kapāru* to express two different actions in the phrase *diqāra tamassi takappar*, “you wash and wipe the pot clean”. The phrase is attested in a Middle Assyrian text concerning the preparation of perfume.¹³

⁵ Cf. CAD K: 184a s.v. *kāpiru* B. See also Bottéro 1980–1983: 295a, who interprets the *kāpiru* as a profession similar to the *ṭābiḫū* “pour l’abattage des animaux”.

⁶ CAD K: 184a.

⁷ Cf. AHw. 443b. On W. von Soden’s authority the meaning “Tempelhandwerker” has then been unconditionally accepted also in the thematic dictionary of Kämmerer & Schwiderski, DAW: 380a.

⁸ CDA: 147b.

⁹ See SAA 12 83 note to r.11. Cf. Jursa & Weszeli 1997–1998: 686b s.v. *kāpiru*: “nicht ‘Schlächter’”.

¹⁰ For the two verbs and the profession, see respectively CAD K: 180a; 178a; and 183b s.v. *kāpiru* A 1.

¹¹ AHw. 442b s.v. *kapāru* I; CAD K: 178b s.v. *k. A 1 c*; CDA: 147a s.v. *k. II*. In accordance with CDA, it is preferable to keep distinct the two meanings of *kapāru*, i.e. “to wipe” and “to smear”. See esp. Janowski 2000: 29–102 (with previous literature on the subject) for discussion and an in-depth treatment of the root **kpr* in Akkadian and other Semitic languages.

¹² Kataja & Whiting 1995: 96, 133a. The meaning “dishwasher” clearly reflects the German translation “Geschirrwäscher” that has been proposed in Deller & Millard 1993: 223.

¹³ KAR 222 ii 23 and *passim*. Cf. AHw. 442b; CAD D: 158a s.v. *diqāru* a 1’, K: 178b s.v. *kapāru* A 1 c; M/II: 32b s.v. *mesû* 1 c; Salonen 1966: 77.

Since the title *kāpir diqāri* has been suggested a possible intrusion¹⁴ into the group of butchers (STT 385) and his exact role has not been determined, I would like to propose a more precise translation of this profession by analyzing all the information in Neo-Assyrian sources as well as studying the usage of the verb *kapāru* and the “peculiarities” of the *diqāru* cooking pots. The first step, however, is to find out what the texts tell us about the professional milieu to which the *kāpir diqāri* belonged; this milieu can be approximately reconstructed on the basis of relationships of the *kāpir diqāri* with other temple-linked occupations.

2. THE *KĀPIR DIQĀRI* WITH COOKS AND BUTCHERS

We can start our enquiry with a royal decree (SAA 12 68). This text dates to the reign of Shalmaneser III (858–824), and is a late copy of a decree of Tukulti-Ninurta I (1243–1207). It concerns the maintenance of the Šarrat-nipḥa temple in Assur and one finds a detailed description of the arrangement of a ritual meal in the document.¹⁵ To this aim, a *diqāru* “cooking pot”¹⁶ is first cleaned, filled with water, and then put on to cook:

UTÚL URUDU *i*’-*kap-pu-ru* A.MEŠ *ú-mal-lu-[u]* / *i-za-’zu*’ *nap-tu-nu ú-’šab’-šú-lu*, “They wipe clean a copper pot and fill it with water, attend to it and cook the meal”. SAA 12 68:17–18 (PKTA 32–34)

ITI.SIG₄ ITI.ŠU URU.*ḥu-bur-ta-a-a* URU.*ki-šir-ta-a-a* UDU.MEŠ SUM-’*nu*’ / LÚ.SANGA *šá*’⁴GAŠAN–KUR-*ḥa* UTÚL URUDU *i-ka-par* A.MEŠ *ú-mal-la* / LÚ.NINDA *pa-pa-su* SUM-*an* URU.*ḥu-bur-ta-a-a* URU.*ki-šir-ta-a-a* / *i-za-zu* GIŠ.MEŠ KÍ.TA UTÚL URUDU *i-šar-ru-pu*, “The Ḥuburtaeans and Kiširtaeans give sheep in Simanu and Du’uzu. The priest of Šarrat-nipḥa wipes clean a copper pot and fills it with water. The baker gives porridge. The Ḥuburtaeans and Kiširtaeans stand by and burn wood beneath the copper¹⁷ pot.” SAA 12 68:28–31

¹⁴ See CAD K: 184a.

¹⁵ See Menzel 1981: 180.

¹⁶ On the term *diqāru* see AHW. 172b; CAD D: 157b; CDA: 60b.

¹⁷ Note that Kataja and Whiting rendered the logogram URUDU as *siparru* “bronze” in SAA 12 68:17, 29, 31, instead of *erû* “copper”. In Neo-Assyrian the term *diqāru* often occurs both together with the logogram UD.KA.BAR (CTN 2 1:13’; PVA 435; RIMA 2 A.0.101.1 i 56, 58, 74, 79, 84, 95, ii 11, 14, 23, 64, 67, 79, 88, 92, 93, 97, 101, 122, iii 4, 7, 47, 58, 60, 61, 87; 2:29; 17 i 79, 80, ii 45, 75, iii 74, 107, iv 117; 19:88; RIMA 3 A.0.102.2 ii 40) and URUDU (CTN 2 155 iii 19; Ki 1904–10–9,154+4 (Iraq 32 [1970]: 152 and pl. XXVII); NATAPA 1 52:14; ND 2307 r.8 (Iraq 16 [1954]: 37–38 and pl. VI); RIMA 2 A.0.101.74; SAA 5 287:3’; SAA 7 87 i 3’; SAA 7 91 r.4; SAA 7 165 r. ii 4’; SAA 12 68:17, 29, 31; SAA 14 448:2; TCL 3 362, 395 (MDOG 115 [1983]: 104, 108); VAT 10448:3; VAT 10568a i 7). For a discussion on the imprecise use of the two terms in the Neo-Assyrian period, see Zaccagnini 1971: 143; Brinkman 1988: 136–137; Fales 1996: 18; Radner 1999c: 128 n. 7. However, since the *diqāru* mentioned in the decree is a finished object it is possible that the material which it was made of was copper and not bronze. But see the remarks in Brinkman 1988: 138.

In this royal decree, we can distinguish the priest of the temple of Šarrat-nip̄a and two groups of persons called “the Ḫuburtaeans” and “the Kiširtaeans” as individuals who took part in the arrangement of the ritual meal and who made use of the *diqāru*.¹⁸ The wiping of the *diqāru* occurs in two passages and the action is explicitly attributed to the priest of the temple in one of them (l. 29), while in another one the same action is performed by more than one person, indicated by the plural form *i-kaḫ-pu-ru* (l. 17). These are possibly to be identified with [LÚ.SANGA] *ša* ^dGAŠAN–KUR-ḫa LÚ.SANGA *ša* É–e–qi, “[the priest] of Šarrat-nip̄a and the priest of the *bēti ēqī*” (see l. 11), although the subject of the verb is not explicitly mentioned. According to the text, the Ḫuburtaeans and the Kiširtaeans are not only supplying sheep for offerings of the temple, but are also involved in arranging the meal by standing by and adding fuel to the fire beneath the cooking pot (ll. 28, 30–31). Contrary to SAA 12 68, in which the wiping is expressed as being carried out by the priests involved in the temple maintenance, the *kāpir diqāri* of SAA 12 83 r.11 seems to hint at a specific profession of wiper/polisher. The *kāpir diqāri* was probably linked to the palace or temple structures as is the case with many other professions. The text (SAA 12 83) lists several professionals to be transferred from Assur to Kalḫu during the reign of Assurnasirpal II; all these workers are qualified as LÚ*.*um-ma-ni* KUR.áš-šú-ra-a-a, “Assyrian craftsmen” (r.23). When we consider the Assyrian craftsmen’s titles in the same passage with the *kāpir diqāri* (r.9–11), we can see that they refer to a broad and differentiated range of professions, some of which take care of food and drink:

1. Suppliers of meat (*rā’i alpi*, “oxherd”, *rā’i iššūri*, “bird keeper”, *ušandū*, “fowler”);
2. Cook (*nuḫatimmu*, “cook”);
3. Milkman (*ša-zizibīšu*, “milkman”).

But the other professions mentioned in the same context (SAA 12 83 r.9–11) have nothing to do with edibles:

4. Wood and reed workers (*ša-gaššātēšu*, “peddler of firewood”, *gaddāiu*, “reed- or wood-cutter(?)”,¹⁹ *atkuppu*, “reed-worker”);
5. Others (*kāpir diqāri*, “dishwasher(?)”, *mallāḫu*, “boatman”).

Of these professions, the *ša-gaššātēšu* and the *kāpir diqāri* can easily be connected to the palace/temple kitchen together with the *nuḫatimmu*. The former is responsible for supplying the firewood (*gaššutu*) used in temples for

¹⁸ For the toponyms Ḫuburtu and Kiširtu see Parpola 1970a: 166, 210.

¹⁹ This meaning is given only in CDA: 91b s.v. *gaṭṭa’a*. Cf. AHw. 273a s.v. *gaddāja*: “ein Funktionär”; CAD G: 7b s.v. *gadā’a*: “an official”. The word is not translated in Kataja & Whiting 1995: 96, 131a, 139b (*rab gaddāi*). See also Donbaz & Parpola 2001: 104 (no. 141 r.13) and 226b: “a profession”.

cultic ceremonies,²⁰ while the latter is more directly linked with the cooking activities, since the *diqāru* cooking pot was a common utensil used by cooks.²¹ The main function of this metal container was to cook the meat portions prepared by butchers and/or meat cooks; this clearly explains why the *kāpir diqāri* is listed in STT 385 together with various types of butchers (LÚ.GÍRL.LÁ, LÚ.ŠUL.ŠUM.MA, LÚ.GAL.GÍRL.LÁ). The clearest indication of the use of *diqārus* to cook meat is to be found in a Neo-Assyrian ritual text concerning an oath: UZU *gab-bu ina* UTÚL URUDU *tu-šab-šal*, “You will cook all the meat in a copper pot”.²² In Neo-Assyrian administrative records there are at least two other types of cooking pots used to cook meat in water; the first one, the *lummu*, appears in sections of accounts from ceremonial banquets listing sheep,²³ while the second one, the *maziu*, is attested in lists of food offerings for the Aššur Temple.²⁴ The latter usually occurs at the end of sections listing several meat varieties (oxen, sheep, birds) and before those referring to bread.²⁵ These offering lists tell us that the *maziu* was used for cooking *mê-šīri* “bouillon”²⁶ and *akussu* “soup”²⁷. It is interesting to note that the preparation of such meat-based soup is mentioned in the decree:

UZU.sal-qu LÚ.SANGA ^dGAŠAN-KUR-*ha* / [L]Ú.SANGA *ša* É-[e]-*qi* UZU.a-gap-pa-a-ni bal-tu-ti i-se¹-niš i-na-áš-šī-ú / [a-n]a¹ qur-še¹ ša¹ ^dGAŠAN-KUR-*ha* ina šÀ a-ku-si i-ba-šu-lum, “The priest of Šarrat-nipḫa and the priest of the *bēt ēqi* take cooked meat together with uncooked wings and make it into a soup [fo]r the wedding night of Šarrat-nipḫa.” SAA 12 68:35–37

Another point in common with *maziu* cooking pots is that the *diqāru* is to be filled with water (SAA 12 68:17, 29), presumably for the preparation of the same kind of dish.

A comparison between the two texts where *nuḫatimmu* and *kāpir diqāri* appear in the same sequence is helpful in determining the role of the *kāpir diqāri* among the kitchen staff. The only difference between these two texts is that in STT 385 the title *kāpir diqāri* is separated from that of the cook by four lines instead of just one profession (title broken away) between them (SAA 12 83):

²⁰ See Radner 1999b: 124–125.

²¹ On the use of the logogram UTÚL in the Hittite *nomen professionis* EN/BEL-UTÚL to refer to kitchen personnel, see Pecchioli Daddi 1982: 57 (“impiegato della cucina”). Terms for cauldrons can also qualify the kitchen room, for example, the West Semitic *bt dwd*, “the house of the cauldrons (*i.e.* the kitchen)”, see Hoftijzer & Jongeling 1995: 242.

²² VAT 10568a i 7. See also VAT 10448:3. For these two texts, see Ebeling 1953: 41–46.

²³ SAA 7 151 ii’ 16; SAA 7 154 ii’ 12’.

²⁴ See the glossary of SAA 7: 217a for nos. 188–191; 196–198; 200–201; 206–207; 209–214; 216.

²⁵ Van Driel 1969: 213–214, though the order by which *maziu*s and birds are listed is not constant in these texts, cf. van Driel 1969: 212.

²⁶ See *mê šīri* in the glossary of SAA 7: 217a.

²⁷ See *akussu* in the glossary of SAA 7: 208b.

SAA 12 83 r.10–11 (BaM 24 239+) STT 385 iii 5'–10'

10 <i>lu-u</i> LÚ*.MU	5' LÚ.MU
11 [<i>lu-u</i> LÚ*.x x x x x	6'–9' (types of cooks, followed by butchers) ²⁸
11 <i>lu-u</i> LÚ*]. <i>ka-pir</i> –UTÚL.MEŠ	10' LÚ. <i>ka-pir</i> –UTÚL.MEŠ

The possibility that the *kāpir diqāri* is mentioned as a member of the temple kitchen staff (SAA 12 83) can also be presumed from the way in which other professions are enumerated in groups in the same text and in the duplicate SAA 12 82.²⁹ If so, the occurrence of this profession together with butchers in STT 385, immediately after cooks, would not be an intrusion. On the contrary, it could indicate that some people served the palace and temple kitchens on a temporary basis. This would explain why *kāpir diqāri* does not regularly occur with *nuḥatimmus* “cooks” and *tābiḥus* “butchers”. In other words, besides the core professions of cooks and butchers there was a range of other kitchen personnel that could receive temporary work assignments. This picture seems to fit well to the condition of individuals engaged to polish the metalware of temple and palace as well as to the people whose work has to do with very specialized and limited fields of application.³⁰ This working hypothesis may be corroborated by the general tenor of SAA 12 83. In fact, the purpose of the long and detailed penalty-clause-like section is to make the king’s order in Nergal-apil-kumu’a’s favour strictly observed by all the professional categories involved in it, both the core professions (smiths, cooks, etc.) and minor occupations temporarily affiliated to them.

A second point is that the professions of the *ša-gaššātēšu* and the *kāpir diqāri* overlap with the actions performed by the priest in the decree SAA 12 68. As seen above, it is the priest of Šarrat-nipḥa who personally burns the firewood and wipes the cooking pot clean.³¹ B. Menzel has suggested that the preparation of firewood

²⁸ See Deller & Millard 1993: 231.

²⁹ Although the fragmentary state of the texts referring to the appointment of Nergal-apil-kumu’a prevents us from having the full list of the professions, it is clear that, at least in some cases, the occupations are enumerated in groups. In particular, four groups are discernible: (1) Those of diviners, exorcists and physicians, e.g., SAA 12 82:6 *lu* L]Ú.ḪAL *lu* LÚ*.MAŠ.MAŠ *lu* LÚ*.A.ʿZUʿ, “or a d]iviner, or an exorcist, or a physician” (cf. also the lists SAA 7 1 and SAA 7 2 for the mention of exorcists before physicians); (2) Smiths, e.g., SAA 12 83 r.5–6 *lu-u* LÚ*.S]IMUG *lu-u* LÚ*.SIMUG.KUG.GI *lu-u* LÚ*.SIMUG–UD.KA.BAR / [*lu-u* LÚ*.SIMUG–AN.BAR, “or a s]mith, or a goldsmith, or a bronzsmith, [or an ironsmith”]; (3) Clergymen, e.g., SAA 12 83 r.6 *lu-u* LÚ*.SANGA *lu-u* LÚ*.TU–É–DINGIR, “or a priest, or a temple enterer”; (4) Weavers and leather workers, e.g., SAA 12 83 r.7–8 *lu-u* LÚ*.UŠ.BAR *lu-u* LÚ*.TÚG.UD / [x x x x x x x x x x x x x x] *lu-u* LÚ*.UŠ.BAR–šip-rat *lu-u* LÚ*.ša-rip–duḥ-ši-a, “or a weaver, or a fuller, [or a ..., or a ...], or a sash-weaver, or a tanner of coloured leather”.

³⁰ This may be seen, for instance, in the case of professions connected to the raw materials, such as metals (*ša-erēšu*, *ša-parzillīšu*), stones (*ša-gabēšu*, *ša-pūllīšu*), leather (*ša-sallīšu*) as well as substances used in some manufacturing activities (*ša-kurrīšu*). For an overview of these professions, see Radner 1999b: 122–125.

³¹ Menzel 1981: 180.

by the *šangû* was probably due to the fact that in minor temples there were no individuals employed in such a task.³² We can therefore assume that the wiping of the cooking pot clean, performed by the priest of Šarrat-nip̄ḥa in person, was similarly due to the lack of a *kāpir diqāri* in the local temple staff. According to this interpretation, then, priests could rely on the presence of such helpers only in large and more important cultic centres.³³ Alternatively, we can assume that the wiping performed by the *kāpir diqāri* did not strictly correspond to that of the *šangû*. In other words, while the work of the former could simply be aimed at cleaning the palace/temple cooking pots, the wiping operation performed by the priest perhaps constituted an act of both cleaning and ritual purification before the meal took place.³⁴

3. THE USE OF *KAPĀRU* IN POLISHING OPERATIONS

At present, the scanty evidence about *kāpir diqāri* seems to indicate only that he was connected to cooks and butchers. For a more precise evaluation of the title, it is useful to investigate what the texts tell us about the *diqāru* cooking pots and the use of the verb *kapāru*. The first relevant aspect concerns the typology of the metal vessels wiped/polished by the *kāpir diqāri*. In Neo-Assyrian sources *diqārus* of different capacity volumes are attested,³⁵ and we can suppose that the one mentioned with the ritual meal in SAA 12 68 belongs, in all probability, to one of the larger specimens of *diqāru*. It was certainly a sort of cauldron, since many individuals are involved in arranging the meal. It is also clear from the text that the cauldron of the Šarrat-nip̄ḥa temple was used to prepare boiled meat.³⁶

In this view, it is possible that the polishing of such large cooking pots, especially those in use in the palace and temple kitchens, could require the work of craftsmen specialized in metal polishing.³⁷ The Neo-Babylonian evidence suggests that smiths

³² Menzel 1981: 272.

³³ Cf. Menzel 1981: 180, 272. On priests' helpers see, e.g., *ša ku-um* AD.MEŠ-ŠU-nu i-za-z[u-u-ni] / ^mPAB-SU DUMU LÚ.MÁ.D[U.DU] / ^mPAB-ŠI-na LÚ.DUMU-[SIG₅?] / ^mdPA-SUM-DUMU.UŠ DUMU x[x x x x] / PAB 3 Á.2.˘MEŠ LÚ.SANGA˘ [x x x], “These are the ones who are stand[ing] in for their fathers: Aḥu-riḥa, son of the boatm[an], Aḥušina, chariot-[fighter], and Nabû-nadin-apli, son of [...] : a total of three helpers for the priest[s]”. SAA 13 207 r.3’–7’

³⁴ For a list of different acts of purification from Assyrian ritual texts see Menzel 1981: 155, which also includes the wiping of the copper cooking pot (*diqāru erû kapāru*) of SAA 12 68:17, 29.

³⁵ According to administrative records and letters, the Neo-Assyrian *diqārus* could be of four different capacity measures: 1 seah (SAA 7 88 r.6 [inventory of copper items]), 3 seahs (SAA 7 88 r.5), 1 homer (CTN 3 3 e.13 [letter of Tartimanni to the *rab êkalli* of Shalmaneser III's *êkal māšarti*]), and 2 homers (SAA 7 87 i 4’ [inventory of gold and copper items]).

³⁶ Menzel 1981: 180; Deller 1985: 370.

³⁷ On the polishing of sacred objects by the Neo-Babylonian artisans in temple workshops, see Joannès 1981: 148, 150. Cf. *ú-de-e* KUG.UD ù *ú-de-e* KUG.GI *šá a-na ka-pa-ra ul-tu é ú-rin-nu šu-šu-ú-nu*, “objets sacrés d’argent et d’or que l’on a sortis du *bīt urinni* pour polissage” YOS 7 185:1–3 (Joannès 1981: 146).

polished metal objects; this may be seen, for example, in the case of the *nappāh siparri* Bel-uballit, who also cleaned (*ana ka-pa-ra*) silver objects.³⁸ Neo-Assyrian texts show that the verb *kapāru* belongs to the terminology of metalworking. As noted above, in CAD the title *kāpir diqāri* is alternatively used as referring to the coating of *diqārus* with bitumen. Although references to coating with bitumen that make use of the verb *kapāru* are not lacking in Neo-Assyrian texts,³⁹ it seems to me that the profession under discussion may best be studied when considering together the polishing and the metallic nature of the items polished. The verb *kapāru* is used in connection with the *diqāru* pot both in the decree SAA 12 68 and in the title *kāpir diqāri* in SAA 12 83, as already observed. A comparison with other occurrences of the verb in Neo-Assyrian documents allows us to have a more precise idea about the metal polishing operation. For example, the inventory text SAA 7 89 is informative. It lists several different types of copper items, all of which are characterized by the use of the verb *kapāru*:

si-da-a-te URUDU / *ša ka-pa-a-ri* / GÚ.È URUDU Q[ĀL?]-tú / *ša ka-pa-a-ri* / 6 *ri-ta-a-te* / *ša ta-mar-zi* / *ša ka-pa-a-ri*, “Copper ...s, to be polished; copper armour, *l[igh]t*, to be polished; 6 furniture feet of ..., to be polished”. SAA 7 89 r.6–12 (ADD 1051+)

ku-ub-te URUDU / *ša ka-pa-a-ri*, “copper knobs (of furniture?), to be refined”.⁴⁰ r.15e–16e

The polishing of metal items is also attested in the Neo-Assyrian letters which inform the king about the progress of works on the parts of temple and furniture. A letter of Nabû-šumu-iddina/Nadinu, mayor or inspector of the Nabû temple during the reigns of Esarhaddon (680–669) and Assurbanipal (668–631), seems to refer to such a work, though in a very fragmentary context:

[*x x š*]^{a?} É.KUR.MEŠ *lik-pu¹-ru?*, “They should wipe clean (the) [... o]f the temples”. SAA 13 83 s.2 (ABL 683)

In this respect, the letters of Ilu-iqbi, member of the temple personnel during the reign of Sargon II (722–705), are particularly interesting, since they inform us about the metal parts of cultic installations and of the temple structure as well as the specific tools which were normally used by the artists to polish them:

[LÚ.u]m¹-*ma¹-a-ni¹* [*x x x*] / *iq¹-ti-bu-[u-ni]* / *ma-a ina* É.GAL *šu-pur⁷* / NA₄.a-ba-na-ti / *ša KUR.i-zal-li* / *ša ka-pa-ri* / *lu-bi-lu-u-ni* / BARAG–NAM.MEŠ KUG.UD / ù GIŠ.IG d⁺INNIN–GIŠ.TUK / *ina šà-bi ni-ik-pur*, “[The ar]tists [...] said [to me]: ‘Write to the Palace that they should bring us wiping-stones

³⁸ Zawadzki 1991: 42 and n. 172. See also Zawadzki 1991: 25 n. 26.

³⁹ See, e.g., É.MEŠ *ša e-[pu-šu-ni]* / [*k*]*i-i* *ša* *ina* URU.ba-q[ar-ri ku-up-ru?] / [*ina*] UGU-*hi-šu-nu li-ik-pa-r[u-ni]*, “The houses which are b[eing built] should be coate[d] with [bitumen] as in Baq[arru]”. SAA 15 41:5’–7’.

⁴⁰ Cf. Zawadzki 1995: 147.

of Izalla. We should cleanse the Throne-of-Destiny of silver and the door of Ištar-of-Hearing”’. SAA 1 141 (ABL 644)

From the words attributed by Ilu-iqbi to the artists, it is also clear that the procurement of the wiping-stones from Izalla⁴¹ fell within the work of the Palace, whose personnel was in charge of supplying the tools for the polishers. Izalla stones are also mentioned in a record listing precious items and quantities of metal to be used for repairing different objects:

9 GÍN 6-su a-na [x x x] / NA₄.MEŠ ša' KUR.ì-z[al'-la], “9 1/6 shekels, for [...], stones of Iz[alla]”. SAA 7 63 iii' 1–2 (ADD 819+)

Other possible references to metal structures, perhaps the same as cited in SAA 1 141 (*parak šīmāti, dalat Issār tašmē*), can be found in another missive of Ilu-iqbi:

[BARAG–NAM.MEŠ² K]UG.UD / [x x x x x] KUG.UD / [x x x ga-a]m-ra, “The [Throne-of-Destiny] of silver and the [.....] of silver are finished”. SAA 1 142:3–5 (CT 53 183)

[x x]-i-si ina pa-an LÚ.GAR.KUR / [x x x] i-ka-pu-ru / [ú-ma-a a]n-nu-rig ga-am-ra / [x x x ša i-k]a-pu-ru-u-ni, “The [...] are cleansing the [...] in the presence of the governor; they will be ready [this] very moment. [The ... who are] wiping [.....]”. Lines 9–12

Basing on the presented evidence, we can infer that the work of polishing included items of copper (SAA 7 89 r.6, 8, 15e; SAA 12 68:17, 29) and silver (SAA 1 141 r.1; 142:3–4). In fact, the verb *kapāru* is used in all these attestations for both the metals.⁴² It becomes clear that different abrasive materials were in use to repair metal parts of buildings in ancient Mesopotamia when comparing the text that mentions the polishing of the door of Ištar-of-Hearing with Old Babylonian attestations,⁴³ which tell us about the use of oil for metal doors. Polishing operations were also expressed in Akkadian by the verb *mašāšu* “to wipe off, clean”,⁴⁴ for which we can here quote a simile regarding the polishing of metal vessels from a literary text:

[i]m-šu'-uš ki-ma qé-e ru-šá-šú uš-[tambit]⁴⁵, “he wiped (my mouth) as (one polishes) a metal vessel and made its filth resplendent”.⁴⁶ *Ludlul bēl nēmeqi* III 100

Apart from the profession *kāpir diqāri*, it is in fact the verb *mašāšu* that provides the participial forms meaning “polisher” in Akkadian. One of them is the feminine

⁴¹ “Stones from Izalla” are now discussed in Radner 2006a: 293.

⁴² Reiter (1997: 444) has tentatively suggested another possible meaning to *kapāru* by translating the verb as “mit Metallfolie auskleiden(?)”, when it refers to working of silver.

⁴³ See the references quoted in CAD Š/I: 324b s.v. *šamnu* c 1'.

⁴⁴ CAD M/I: 360a s.v. *mašāšu* 1. Cf. also Joannès 1993–97: 111a: “Le verbe *mašāšum* a également le sens de ‘frotter un métal pour le polir’ (a propos du bronze)”.

⁴⁵ Lambert 1960: 52 (Si 55 q.r.25). For the restoration and references see Deller & Watanabe 1980: 215; see also CAD R: 432a s.v. *rūšu* A a; CAD Q: 291a s.v. *qū* C.

⁴⁶ For the translation see the remarks in Deller & Watanabe 1980: 215.

profession called *māšištu*, which only occurs in the lexical list Lu III ii 7 (MSL 12 123),⁴⁷ the second is the masculine epithet *māšišu* (written *ma-ši-šu*), referring to the god Ea in a creation myth.⁴⁸ Both these forms probably referred to the exorcistic terminology of purification.⁴⁹

Copper cooking pots used in temple ceremonies also required periodic repair. The following inventory text provides indirect evidence for this by listing two types of copper cooking pots that are qualified with the adjective *kassupu*, “broken, chipped”:

2 UTÚL.MEŠ 3BÁN-*a-a* / 1 : 1BÁN 4 : *ka-su*¹¹-*pat* / 1 *du-du* URUDU *dan-nu* / 1 : *kas-su-pi* :!, “2 cooking pots, 3 seahs each; 1 ditto, 1 seah; 4 ditto, chipped; 1 large kettle of copper; 1 ditto, chipped, ditto”. SAA 7 88 r.5–8 (ADD 964)

Among the Neo-Assyrian professions of the *ša-X-šu*-type, especially *ša-dūdēšu* is interesting. A man called Sinqi-Aššur, *ša-dūdēšu*, is attested in two texts (MAss 19:5', MAss 29:4) which date to the reign of Assurbanipal or later.⁵⁰ The possible translation of this profession is “kettle maker/kettle man”.⁵¹ A parallel to this occupation can be found in the Old Babylonian title LÚ.URUDU.ŠEN in the context of *ruqqu* kettles, but no syllabically written Akkadian equivalent to this Old Babylonian title is known.⁵² But what we do know is that the *ša-X-šu* professions were subordinate members of palace or temple households, probably engaged in the production of commodities.⁵³ Though the exact nature of the *ša-X-šu*-type professions still escapes us, we can tentatively assume that the work of the *ša-dūdēšu* also concerned the repair of broken metal cooking pots. The fact that the two activities, namely the repairing of *dūdus* and the polishing of *diqārus*, may be roughly considered complementary, does not however prove that both the *ša-dūdēšu* and the *kāpir diqāri* belonged to the same professional category, e.g. to that of specialized smiths.⁵⁴

4. REASONS FOR POLISHING

A few conclusions can be drawn on the basis of the attestations discussed above. We can suggest that the periodic polishing of metal artefacts was a necessary operation

⁴⁷ See AHw. 1574a; CAD M/I: 367b; CDA: 202a.

⁴⁸ Mayer 1987: 56 (1.4').

⁴⁹ On the reading of the epithet of Ea as *māšišu* and the possible semantic connection of *māšišu* and *māšištu* with *mašmaššu*, “exorcist”, see Livingstone 1988: 46.

⁵⁰ PNA 3/I: 1140a s.v. *Sinqi-Aššūr* (no. 3); Radner 1999b: 121.

⁵¹ Radner 1999b: 125.

⁵² CAD R: 419b-420a s.v. *ruqqu*.

⁵³ Radner 1999b: 125.

⁵⁴ On the *ša-dūdēšu* as a designation of a specialized smith, see Radner 1999b: 125.

due to the oxidation.⁵⁵ In the case of objects of oxidized copper this operation could be based on the use of deoxidizing oil.⁵⁶ For this end, F. Joannès connects the distribution of oil recorded in administrative texts from Mari.⁵⁷ Perhaps more pertinent is the evidence provided by the Neo-Assyrian text TH 67 from Guzana (Tell Halaf), where large quantities of copper (URUDU) and oil are listed together.⁵⁸ As noted above, other substances and tools could also be used for polishing metals in addition to oil.⁵⁹ For example, the “stones” (*abanāti*) from Izalla, a region that corresponds to the classical *Izala mons*, Ṭūr ‘Abdīn in Syriac sources, and Karaca Dağ of modern Turkey,⁶⁰ are explicitly mentioned in a letter (SAA 1 141) in connection with the polishing of elements which refer to cultic installations (the Throne-of-Destiny) and parts of doors (the door of Ištar-of-Hearing).⁶¹ Further, we cannot exclude that these stones were also used in the polishing of metal vases. The polishing operation by using special stones is not difficult to explain. Metal items could be wiped by means of particular natural abrasives such as pumice or different types of both hard and friable stones; some of them were often used after crushing them into a powder.⁶² They constitute a common way of polishing, both as aiming at polishing away “any tool-marks remaining on the object after completion of the casting process”,⁶³ and, we presume, at restoring the original brilliance of the oxidized metal surface of the objects. In this respect, it is perhaps interesting to observe that the region of Karaca Dağ, known to the Assyrians as Izalla and Kašiiari, is particularly rich in pumice stone (lava).⁶⁴ Pumice, as well as

⁵⁵ Joannès 1993–1997: 111a. On the particular use of verdigris (*šuhtu*) in medicine see Joannès 1993–1997 and Röllig 1980–1983: 348b.

⁵⁶ Joannès 1993–97: 111a.

⁵⁷ On these attestations see CAD D: 158a s.v. *diqāru* a 1’; Salonen 1966: 75; Charpin 1984: 84–103; 1987. Cf. Joannès 1993–97: 111a. Oil was also used to clean jewelry, see, for example, the Neo-Babylonian occurrence quoted in CAD K: 179a s.v. *kapāru* A 3 b.

⁵⁸ [x x x A]NŠE Ī.MEŠ / [1-me] 18 MA.NA / ina ŠĀ-bi 1 MA.NA / qa-al-li / 1-me 25 MA.NA / 5/6 MA.NA / ina ŠĀ-bi 1 MA.NA, “[n ho]mers of oil, [100+]18 minas (of copper), among them 1 mina of poor quality (lit. small); 125 minas (and) 5/6 minas (of copper), among them 1 mina (of poor quality).” TH 67:1–r.7 and [Ī.M]EŠ a-na URUDU ni-da-an, “We will give [o]il for copper.” TH 67 r.11. On the content of this text see also the discussion in Friedrich *et al.* 1940: 42–43.

⁵⁹ Note that oil was also used during the casting process to produce conditions of reduction and to make the metal surface paler, see Oppenheim 1966: 39. For a different opinion, see Reiter 1997: 444 n. 138.

⁶⁰ The area of Izalla was renowned in the Neo-Assyrian period for its wine; however the mention of Izalla wiping stones in Ilu-iqbi’s letter clearly shows that this territory was well known not only for the local wine production, but also for the presence of particular stones used in metal working. The occurrence of SAA 1 141 is not mentioned in Postgate 1976–1980: 225b–226b s.v. *Izalla*, but see Radner 2006a: 292–298.

⁶¹ For the metal doors of a temple in ritual texts, see, e.g., KAR 214 = Menzel 1981: no. 61 i 21–22 GIŠ.IG.MEŠ KUG.GI / GIŠ.IG.MEŠ KUG.UD GIŠ.IG.MEŠ UD.KA.BAR.

⁶² For the basics on the natural abrasives see, e.g., *The New Encyclopaedia Britannica*, vol. 21 (1993¹⁵): 290–291. See also <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Abrasives>.

⁶³ Gunter 2000: 1546. Cf. also Forbes 1950: 137; Moorey 1985: 39.

⁶⁴ Thompson 1936: 191. See most recently Radner 2006a: 293–294.

carborundum and sandstone, constituted some of the grinding materials available to the ancient craftsmen. Medieval Islamic writers provide further detailed information on the Near Eastern practice of pot polishing. We know, for example, that copper frying pans were polished by using potsherds (*madqūq al-khazaf*) as an abrasive, while water pots could be cleaned out by using broken ceramics (*shaqaf*) as well as potash (*ushnān*).⁶⁵ As regards the *diqārus* mentioned in the decree SAA 12 68, the recurrent polishing of these large containers constituted a cultic obligation for the priests in charge of the arrangement of the ritual meal. The cleansing may also have targeted “purifying” the cultic utensils, as this could well explain why the priest of the temple himself had to clean the cooking pot.⁶⁶ In ancient Mesopotamia, dirt signified impurity and sin, and correspondingly, the cleaning of the items belonging to the temple and used in cult aimed at purification.⁶⁷

A second possibility, besides getting rid of copper oxidation, is that the polishing of the *diqāru* cooking pots aimed at removing the soot resulting from the continuous usage of these pots for cooking. This aspect can be confirmed, for instance, by consulting *Maqlū* (III 116, 172–173) and the Middle Assyrian text KAR 220 r. iv 6–7, which use the words *ummīnu*, *luḥummū*, *tišīšu* and *minduḥru* for the soot in connection with *diqāru* cooking pots:⁶⁸

ḥa-ḥa-a ša UDUN um-mi-nu ša UTÚL, “slag from a kiln, soot from a cooking pot”.⁶⁹ *Maqlū* III 116

ki-ma di-qa-ri ina lu-ḥu-um-me-šu-nu / li-is-pu-uḥ-ku-nu-ši ^d*Gira iz-zu*, “may raging fire destroy you like cooking pots through their soot!”⁷⁰ III 172–173

ṭi-iš-ṭi-ša u mi-du-uḥ-ra [ša i]na il-di DUG.UTÚL i-ri-ḥu-ni tu-na-kar, “you remove the sediment and (other) residue that has been left over in the bottom of the clay pot”. KAR 220 r. iv 6–7

Deller and Watanabe have collected examples from Middle Assyrian texts that provide further information on the wiping of cooking pots. These attestations make

⁶⁵ See Milwright 1999: 512.

⁶⁶ On the use of *kuppuru*, “to purify magically”, see CAD K: 179b s.v. *kapāru* A 3 d. The most evident examples of washing procedures with purifying purposes in ritual context are in texts referring to the mouth-washing rituals concerning the “mouth” of divine statues, for which see Walker & Dick 2001: 10–11. See also the discussion in Janowski 2000: 33–60.

⁶⁷ On this aspect, see Albertz 2001: 142.

⁶⁸ For the terms, see the entries in AHw. 562a, 655a, 1392b; CAD L: 239b, M/II: 86a, T: 114a; CDA: 184b, 210b, 415a. For *ummīnu*, see AHw. 169b s.v. *dikmēnu* and CAD D: 158b s.v. *diqāru* a 3’.

⁶⁹ Meier 1937: 25: “ich nehme dir einen Aschenklumpen vom Ofen, die Schlacke(?) vom Topfe”. Cf. Salonen 1966: 78. See also KAR 94:37 (*Maqlū* Commentary) *um-me-e ša UTÚL*.

⁷⁰ Meier 1937: 28: “wie die Töpfe durch ihren Russ vernichte euch der wütende Gira!”. Instead of the term *luḥummū* the parallel text VAT 13654 has *ru-šum-ti-šu-nu*, another word denoting the soot, cf. Meier 1937: 28 n. 3.

use of the verb *šukkulu*,⁷¹ a synonym of *kapāru*, and we can see that the interior part of the cooking pot (*bētānu ša diqāri*) could be cleaned by using a rag (*šuhattu*).⁷² The dirt of cooking pots must have been a common aspect in the daily life and imagery of ancient Mesopotamia.⁷³ It may also be useful to recall the last verses of the Gilgameš Epic, in which the “scrapings from the pots” (*šukkulāt diqāri*) and “bread crumbs” (*kusīpāt akali*) are mentioned as the only food for the man whose ghost has no one to care for him.⁷⁴ When considering the dirt of cooking pots, it is helpful to resort to the distinction proposed by J. Bottéro on the usage of pots in Mesopotamian cuisine. According to him, some cooking pots (*marmites*) were filled with large amounts of water and needed then a long time to boil, while other pots (*chaudrons*) needed very little or no water at all.⁷⁵ As a consequence, pots belonging to this second type were usually subjected to forming an internal deposit; this deposit, which was derived from meals cooked previously, could still be used to cook new meals. This could happen by adding a little liquid and increasing the exposure of the pot to the fire.⁷⁶ It is interesting to observe that the Old Babylonian recipes studied by Bottéro make use of the verb *ḫalāšu* to express the action of preparing the pot for cooking.⁷⁷ This verb, which denotes the operation of scraping off, is to be connected to the common practice of wiping clean metal containers affected by food deposits.⁷⁸ Therefore, it is reasonable to think that this operation had to be performed every single time before the pot was used to arrange a new meal.⁷⁹

A quick look at the biblical sources may widen our enquiry. In fact, the well-known biblical passage about the parable of the filthy cooking pot in the Book of Ezekiel could refer to both of the possibilities, *i.e.*, to the oxidization and the soot of pots. Moreover, this passage is interesting not only because the prophet compares Jerusalem, the city of sin, to an encrusted pot, but also because there is a detailed description of cooking operations. The basic sequence of the actions expressed in the passage can be compared with that of SAA 12 68 (Lines 17, 29; 35–37; 31).

⁷¹ Deller & Watanabe 1980; AHw. 1590b *s.v.* *šukkulu*; CAD Š/III: 219a *s.v.* *š.*; CDA: 381b *s.v.* *š.*

⁷² Deller & Watanabe 1980: 206–207.

⁷³ Note also a popular insult in Iraqi Arabic: *ibn imšakkkham biškām ṭāwah u-dihin liyyah*, “the son of the one who is blackened with the soot of the frying pan and oil of fat”, see Masliyah 2001: 303.

⁷⁴ Parpola 1997b: 116, line 153. On the word *šukkultu* see Deller & Watanabe 1980: 211–213; CAD Š/III: 219a; CDA: 381b.

⁷⁵ Bottéro 1995: 41–42, 169.

⁷⁶ Bottéro 1995: 60, 65, 169.

⁷⁷ YOS 11 26 i 5b, iii 46, iv 10b. For the relevant passages of this text, see Bottéro 1995: 11–15, 60, 89, 92.

⁷⁸ Bottéro 1995: 60, 169.

⁷⁹ Bottéro 1995: 169.

Ezek 24:3–5, 10

(3) Put on the cooking pot (סיר); put it on and pour water into it. (4) Put into it the pieces of meat, all the choice pieces – the leg and the shoulder. Fill it with the best of these bones. (5) Take the pick of the flock. Pile wood beneath it for the bones; bring it to a boil and cook the bones in it. (10) So heap on the wood and kindle the fire. Cook the meat well, mixing in the spices; and let the bones be charred.

Assyrian decree

(17, 29) The pot is filled with water.

(35–37) Several meat pieces are listed in the text (l. 10 and passim); the pot is used to cook boiled meat.

(31) The wood is burned beneath the pot.

The biblical passage, however, does not limit itself to describing such common cooking operations, but specifies the conditions affecting the cooking pot to which the city is equated:

Woe to the city of bloodshed, to the pot now encrusted (סיר אשר הלאהה), whose deposit (חלאהה) will not go away (לא יצאה)! Ezek 24:6

(11) Then set the empty pot on the coals till it becomes hot and its copper glows so its impurities (טמאהה) may be melted and its deposit (חלאהה) burned away. (12) It has frustrated all efforts; its heavy deposit (רבת הלאהה) has not been removed (לא תצא), not even by fire. (13) Now your impurity is lewdness. Because I tried to cleanse you (טהרתך) but you would not be cleansed from your impurity (לא טהרת מטמאתך), you will not be clean again until my wrath against you has subsided. Ezek 24:11–13

What we have here is a clear description of a cleansing operation that does not consist of wiping the dirty surface of the pot by means of abrasive and polishing substances, but in heating it till its deposit is consumed by the fire.

Finally, I would like to complete our enquiry on cleansing operations by referring to the same Semitic root in Aramaic. M. Sokoloff has listed the word כפרא, *kpr'* in his dictionary of Jewish Babylonian Aramaic, but this lemma is only attested in the expression כפרא דודי, *kpr' dwdy* in the Talmudic tractate *Baba Qamma*.⁸⁰ Scholars have interpreted this passage in various ways. G.H. Dalman understood the word referring to the condition of the metal surface of the pots and tentatively translated it as “Kupfergrün(?)”.⁸¹ Another translation is given by M. Jastrow, who interpreted the term as “sediments of dye (or rust) of the kettles”.⁸² The lemma is similarly taken by Sokoloff “a type of dye, lit. smearing of the pots”, since it is currently

⁸⁰ *Baba Qamma* 101a. For a translation of the passage, see Epstein 1935: 586.

⁸¹ Dalman 1922²: 206a.

⁸² Jastrow 1950: 662a.

understood as referring to the sediments in the dyer’s kettle that would have caused a defective dying of the wool.⁸³ Sokoloff explains the Aramaic form כפרה by the help of the Akkadian *kapāru*, “to smear”, and compares the Talmudic attestation with the above-mentioned phrase *diqāra takappar*.⁸⁴ However, Sokoloff’s proposal shows that he only considered the second meaning given by CAD (s.v. *kapāru* A)⁸⁵ to understand the phrase *diqāra takappar* and, through it, the Aramaic form, although CAD correctly registered this phrase under the first meaning.⁸⁶ The form *kpr*’ is connected to the meaning “ab-, wegwischen” in B. Janowski’s semantic classification of the **kpr*-forms in Jewish Babylonian Aramaic.⁸⁷ This corresponds to the Akkadian verb when referring to the wiping of objects. In any case, what is important to note in the Aramaic occurrence is the association of a **kpr*-form (concerning sediments) with a term denoting a pot, i.e. דוד, *dwd*.⁸⁸ Since the meaning of the Aramaic *dwd* corresponds to Akkadian *dūdu*,⁸⁹ we can consider it equivalent to the *diqāru* pot from the point of view of the function, i.e. as a pot used to heat liquid substances, though in the Talmudic passage the pot is used by the dyer to dye wool.

In conclusion, we can tentatively suggest that the profession *kāpir diqāri* could be translated as “cooking pot polisher”. The craftsman was probably periodically engaged in polishing of the kitchen’s copper cooking pots whose surface had become oxidized or just sooty. This operation was performed by using special abrasive substances such as those discussed above. Clearly, the operation had to be carried out repeatedly before the cauldrons could be used again for new meals, as shown by the evidence of the use of pots in Mesopotamian cuisine. Regarding the overlapping of the action of wiping performed by the priest in SAA 12 68 with the activity of the *kāpir diqāri*, it is important to note that a similar situation can also be seen in the other professions of the temple milieu, namely in those of the *ša-endīšu* and the *ša-gaššātēšu*. These two professions are respectively mentioned as people responsible for the aromatics and firewood used in cultic ceremonies in the text that lists duties of the Aššur Temple personnel.⁹⁰ But if we consider the use of these two substances in rituals, we can see that these two professions do not play any

⁸³ DJBA: 597b: “defective dying resulting in streaks”.

⁸⁴ DJBA: 597b.

⁸⁵ CAD K: 178–179: (1) “to wipe off” and (2) “to smear on (a paint or a liquid)”.

⁸⁶ CAD K: 178b s.v. *kapāru* A 1 c: “to wipe objects clean”.

⁸⁷ Janowski 2000: 72–73 (KPR I a) and table on page 101.

⁸⁸ DJBA: 315b s.v. *dūdā*: “kettle, pot”; DJPA: 140b s.v. *dwd*: “pot, cauldron”. For other West Semitic forms see, e.g., Ug. *dd* (UT: 384a [no. 645]: “‘pot’ or a certain unit of dry measure”); Heb. *dūd* (HAL: 215b s.v. *d*. 1: “deep two-handled cooking pot”); Palm. *dwd* (Hillers & Cussini 1996: 355b: “kettle”); Syr. *dōdā*’ (LS: 144a: “*olla*”).

⁸⁹ See AHw. 174b s.v. *dūdu* I; CAD D: 170a s.v. *d*. A; CDA: 61b s.v. *d*. In Neo-Assyrian texts are attested typologies of *dūdu* of bronze (PVA 438) as well as of copper (CTN 2 155 iii 18; SAA 7 87 i 5’; SAA 7 88 r.7).

⁹⁰ PKTA 36–38 = Menzel 1981: no. 22 ii 4, 6, r.i 20. See Radner 1999b: 121, 122, 124–125.

role in the ceremonies. It is the cultic performer – king or priest – who personally throws incense (*endu tadānu*)⁹¹ and burns the firewood for the cultic meal (*gaššutu šarāpu*).⁹² Since the operation of wiping the cooking pot before the ceremonial meal was a specific duty of clergymen in the Šarrat-nip̄a temple, it is reasonable to assume that such an act had some significance in the ritual sphere and did not merely constitute a preparatory phase to the meal of the god. On the other hand, the activity of the *kāpir diqāri* may have taken place whenever the kitchen personnel needed his services.

⁹¹ Menzel 1981: no. 43 r. iv 17, 22, 31; no. 45 i 10, 12, ii 26, r. iii 4', 6', iv 18'. See also Menzel 1981: 165–166.

⁹² SAA 12 68:26.