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► **To cite this version:**

Alice Mouton. Eating or Not Eating Consecrated Food: Some Dietary Practices in Hittite Religious Texts. *Zeitschrift für Assyriologie und vorderasiatische Archäologie*, 2024, 114 (1), pp.43-57. 10.1515/za-2024-0006 . hal-04606580

**HAL Id: hal-04606580**

**<https://hal.science/hal-04606580v1>**

Submitted on 17 Dec 2024

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## Eating or not Eating Consecrated Food: Some Dietary Practices in Hittite Religious Texts

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Abstract: In Hittite religious texts, many references to human consumption or, on the contrary, to prohibiting human consumption of sacrificial food are made, but they have not yet been studied as such. This paper will endeavor to fill this gap by gathering the data for the first time. It will also examine them in context in order to better understand the underlying mechanism of human consumption of consecrated food in Hittite Anatolia.

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Commensality rules, i.e. rules on how and with whom to share food and how these rules shape social relations, are still vastly unexplored in Hittitology, although Francesco Barsacchi's (2019) paper<sup>1</sup> on redistribution of food during Hittite festivals fills some of the many gaps.<sup>2</sup>

One of the key expressions of Hittite commensality is *adanna wek-* “asking to eat”. While briefly browsing through the many occurrences of this expression,<sup>3</sup> we observe the variety of configurations. One of the possibilities is to claim food for the divine guest of a festive banquet, as is the case in a sequence of the festival for Ištar of Niniveh, which states:

*nu* MUNUS.LUGAL *adanna uekzi nu* <sup>NINDA</sup>*ān kue paršiyannai* TU<sup>HA</sup>=*ya kue zikkanzi n=ašta kuēz=(ziy)a tepu*  
*daškanzi nu=(š)šan* <sup>LU</sup>*AZU PANI DINGIR-LIM EGIR-pa zikkezzi nu akuwanna piyanzi § nu IŠTU NINDA.SIG<sup>MES</sup> kūš*  
*DINGIR<sup>MES</sup> kalutiškanzi akuwanna=ya apūš=pat* *DINGIR<sup>MES</sup> irhānzi nu mān ANA MUNUS.LUGAL ZI-anza nu*  
*DINGIR<sup>MES</sup> anda [har]piškezzi n=uš* *DINGIR<sup>MES</sup> harpanduš [ak]kuškezzi § [mā]n=ši āššu=ma nu hanti hanti*  
*DINGIR-LAM [akku]škezzi*

“The queen asks to eat. The warm bread loaves that she crumbles and the soups that they place, they take a bit of each and the AZU-practitioner places (them) back before the deity. They give to drink. § They treat jointly these deities with unleavened bread loaves and they also give to drink to those same deities one after the other. If the queen so wishes, she [c]ombines the deities together, so that she [d]rinks (to) them, (namely) the deities combined (together). § But [i]f (it) pleases her, she [dr]inks (to each) deity individually.”

<sup>1</sup> Barsacchi (2019, 15) only makes a brief reference to the “sacral character of the shared food” without elaborating on it and prefers to translate *šuppa* as “meat”, not “consecrated meat cuts”. The abbreviations used here come from H.G. Güterbock, H.A. Hoffner and T. van den Hout (eds), *The Hittite Dictionary of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago* (= CHD), L-N, Chicago 1989:xxi-xxix; CHD P, Chicago 1997:vii-xxvi; CHD Š, Chicago 2002:vi-viii.

<sup>2</sup> See also Collins 1995. Ermidoro (2015) exemplifies what can be done for each cuneiform corpus, using Neo-Assyrian textual sources as the basis of her enquiry. I have collated all the quoted excerpts from the online photographs of the tablets. Therefore, my readings and translations might vary from the previous editions.

<sup>3</sup> Through the online database of the HFR project: <https://www.hethport.uni-wuerzburg.de/HFR/suche.php>.

KUB 27.16 iv 18-29 (CTH 714: Festival for Ištar of Niniveh, NS; HFR-Team, hethiter.net/:HFR-Basiscorpus KUB 27.16 (2021-12-31))

What immediately follows the queen's demand is her crumbling of bread—a gesture which symbolizes her serving this bread as food to the deity.<sup>4</sup> The queen is the one both asking for food on behalf of the deity and then serving it. In this way she shows that she is the ritual patroness in the ceremony; serving the deity in person also connects her with that divine entity. Sometimes the identity of the mortal making the demand is unspecified, as is the case during the *witasšiya*-festival:

*nu adanna uekanz[i] nu* <sup>NINDA</sup>*ān*<sup>HÁ</sup> <sup>NINDA</sup>.<sup>SIG</sup><sup>HÁ</sup>=*ya kue paršiyanniya[nzi] n=ašta peran arha tepu paršiyannai nu=(š)šan EGIR-pa INA* <sup>GIŠ</sup><sup>BANŠUR</sup> <sup>DINGIR-LIM</sup> *dāi*

“They ask to eat. He (i.e. the ritual patron) crumbles a bit (of each) warm bread loaves and unleavened bread loaves that they crumbl[e] and then he places (them) back on the deity's table.”

KUB 17.24+ iii 8'-11' (CTH 691: *witasšiya*-festival, NS; HFR-Team, hethiter.net/:HFR-Basiscorpus KUB 17.24+ (2021-12-31))

In this excerpt, crumbling the bread and then placing it on the divine table are the only actions that designate the ritual patron as such. However, crumbling the bread as a way to serve it to the deity is clearly the response to “asking to eat”, as in the previous excerpt.

On other occasions, “asking to eat” clearly implies human consumption of food, as is the case in this excerpt of the *hišuwā*-festival:

*namma mān* <sup>MUNUS</sup>.<sup>LUGAL</sup> *apiya nu IŠTU ŠA* <sup>D</sup>*Lellūri adanna uēkzi mān* <sup>MUNUS</sup>.<sup>LUGAL</sup>=*ma UL apiya nu IŠTU ŠA* <sup>D</sup>*Lellūri* <sup>LÚ</sup><sup>SANGA</sup> *uēkzi*

“Then if the queen (is) there, she asks to eat beside Lelluri. But if the queen (is) not there, the SANGA-priest asks (to eat) beside Lelluri.”

KUB 12.12 vi 6-10 (CTH 628: *hišuwā*-festival, NS; HFR-Team, hethiter.net/:HFR-Basiscorpus KUB 12.12 (2021-12-31))

In this passage, commensality between deities and mortals is emphasized by the immediate proximity of the main human protagonist of the ceremony with the main divine recipient of that

<sup>4</sup> Hoffner (1974, 217) instead understood this differently: “The breaking of the bread, like the pouring out of the libation, symbolized its consumption by the deity.” However, these acts actually precede the symbolic divine consumption of the consecrated food, since generally the mortals do not cut further the consecrated meat in front of the divine image for symbolizing its consumption. In some cases (see for example Mouton 2004, n°17, 23 and 31 and Mouton 2005, n°41), the king or someone else cuts in bits the *šuppa* before offering them to the deity, but this procedure is not widespread, as far as I could see.

ceremony. This is what Alessandro Falassi (1967, 4) would call “rites of conspicuous consumption”, during which food is, for the mortals, a means to communicate with the divine. Other examples similar to this are known, including in the ritual texts.<sup>5</sup> Another illustration of commensality is in a sequence of the festival for Telepinu:

*n=apa ašeššar pankuš=(š)a āppai EGIR=ŠU=ma DINGIR<sup>MEŠ</sup> É<sup>D</sup>Haškalan ekuzi n=apa DUMU.LUGAL āppai UZU<sup>ŠUPPA</sup><sup>HÁ</sup> kue ZAG.GAR.RA-aš peran kittat n=e=z lukkatta LÚ.MEŠ<sup>SANGA</sup> danzi INA É DINGIR-LIM zanuwanzi nu=(š)šan ANA DINGIR-LIM EGIR-pa tianzi adanzi akuwanzi U<sub>4</sub>.2.KAM QATI*

“The assembly and the congregation are finished. Afterward, he (i.e. the prince) drinks (to) the deities (of) the temple of Haškala. The prince is finished. The day after, the SANGA-priests take the consecrated meat cuts that lay before the altar; they cook (them) in the precinct and they put them back (before) the deity. They eat (and) drink. The second day is over.”

KUB 53.14+ ii 1-5 (CTH 638: Festival for Telepinu, MS; HFR-Team, hethiter.net/:HFR-Basiscorpus KBo 54.125+ (2021-12-31))

Here, the sacrificial food is offered twice to the deity: once raw and a second time after being cooked. Mortals eat and drink while the deity symbolically eats the cooked meat; which is yet another commensality practice between gods and men. Note, however, that the text does not specify what the mortals eat on this occasion. It is quite often the case that the nature of the food eaten by the human participants is not specified, but we will see that there are exceptions.

A first exception occurs in a fragment of a ritual text, which reads:

*UDU=kan arkanzi nu šuppa UZU<sup>NÍG</sup>.GIG UZU<sup>GABA</sup> SAG.DU=ZU GÌR<sup>MEŠ</sup> PANI<sup>GIŠ</sup>BANŠUR dāi UZU<sup>NÍG</sup>.GIG<sup>HÁ</sup> zanuwanzi NINDA.GUR<sub>4</sub>.RA<sup>HÁ</sup> paršiyanda nu 1 NINDA.GUR<sub>4</sub>.RA dagan dāi nu malti<sup>D</sup>UTU-i kuiš peran arta nu=wa=kan<sup>D</sup>UTU-i parranda SIG<sub>5</sub>-in memiške 2 NINDA.GUR<sub>4</sub>.RA<sup>HÁ</sup> paršiya n=aš=kan ANA<sup>GIŠ</sup>BANŠUR dāi šer=(r)a=(š)šan UZU<sup>NÍG</sup>.GIG dāi KAŠ.GEŠTIN BAL-anti UZU<sup>I</sup>=ma zanuwanzi n=at arha adanzi nu 3=ŠU akuwanzi nu<sup>GIŠ</sup>BANŠUR šarā danzi*

“They *skin* the sheep. He (i.e. the ritual patron) puts before the table the consecrated meat cuts, (namely) the liver, the chest, its head (and) feet; they cook the liver. Loaves of thick bread (are) crumbled. He puts one loaf of thick bread on the ground and recites: ‘(You) who stand before the Sun-god, convey good (words) to the Sun-god!’ He crumbles two loaves of thick bread and puts them on the table. He puts a liver on top (of each); he libates ‘beer-wine’. They cook the (sheep) fat and then they eat it entirely. They drink three times and then they take the table (away).”

KUB 17.28 iii 4-15 (CTH 458: Fragment of text of exorcism, NS; Torri 2004, 133)

<sup>5</sup> See for instance KUB 58.108 iv 15’: [nu=za] EN SISKUR PANI DINGIR-LIM ēzzai.

In this passage, the human participants whose identity is not provided eat the fat of the sacrificed sheep. This fat is not explicitly listed among the *šuppa*, i.e. the “consecrated meat cuts”, but it might be so implicitly, since sheep-fat occurs among the *šuppa* elsewhere.<sup>6</sup> Parallel to the passage we have seen earlier, the liver which is among the *šuppa* is offered twice: once raw and a second time after being cooked, since it is put back on top of the sacrificial bread, itself placed on the divine table.

This section illustrates the variety of commensality practices through the contextual study of the expression “asking to eat” and other keywords; it could be extended and probably should.

This article will rather focus on human consumption or non-consumption of consecrated food in the ceremonial and ritual context. Consecrated food partly corresponds to Hittite <sup>(UZU)</sup>*šuppa* “consecrated meat cuts” and any other foodstuff placed as a sacrifice before the divine image, be it bread, vegetables, etc. Contrary to what the CHD suggests,<sup>7</sup> we shall keep the traditional translation of “consecrated meat cuts” for the Hittite noun *šuppa*, since its root is clearly the same as that of adjective *šuppi-* which means “sacred, consecrated” (CHD Š, 618 *sub šuppi-*), which in turn is the origin of the verb *šuppiyahh-* “to consecrate” (CHD Š, 626 *sub šuppiyahh-*). The secular term for “meat” is the logogram UZU, which also occurs on its own in at least 20 fragments of festival texts according to the HFR database.<sup>8</sup> Here is an illustration of this from a sequence of the AN.TAH.ŠUM festival:

LU.MEŠ MUHALDIM TU<sub>7</sub> MĒ UZU *tiyanzi*

“The cooks place a water-stew (made of) meat.”

KBo 4.9 v 46 (CTH 612: AN.TAH.ŠUM festival, LNS; HFR-Team, [hethiter.net/HFR-Basiscorpus](http://hethiter.net/HFR-Basiscorpus) KBo 4.9 (2021-12-31))

The various ritual procedures for consecrating food will not be dealt with here, since these have already been studied in the past (Mouton 2007, 81–82). Suffice it to say that, although considered to be the central act of sacrificing, placing food before the divine image—either on the divine table or on the ground, on foliage, etc.—, is not enough to make it consecrated to the

<sup>6</sup> In KBo 10.31, for instance: see below.

<sup>7</sup> CHD Š, 608 *sub* <sup>(UZU)</sup>*šuppa-* translates this term as “meat”.

<sup>8</sup> From the HFR database *sub* UZU. Other examples are KBo 8.91+ rev.<sup>?</sup> 7'; Bo 3787:2'; Bo 8250:3'; KBo 21.39 rev.<sup>?</sup> 9'; KUB 20.78 iv 29; KBo 11.29 obv. 6; KUB 29.7+ rev. 63'; KBo 10.31 iv 3'; KBo 10.28+ v 1, 2; KBo 46.113:2'; KUB 36.45:5'; KBo 17.42+ vi 8'; KBo 11.46 v 13'; KBo 45.26 r.col. 11'; KBo 54.143 obv.<sup>?</sup> 10'; KUB 40.102+ iv 14'; KUB 30.40+ i 23; KBo 29.89+ ii 25'; KBo 21.78+ iv<sup>!</sup> 21'; KBo 54.125+ ii 30. The list is not exhaustive. The terms <sup>(UZU)</sup>*happešsar* (HW<sup>2</sup> H, 219–25) and <sup>(UZU)</sup>ÜR should also be considered as generic terms for “meat”.

divine. Ritual conditioning, such as purification, is essential to turn ordinary food into divine food. Hence, I cannot follow the CHD (Š, 622 *sub šuppi-*) in the following reading and translation:

*šuppa tianzi* EGIR=ŠU *šuppa ēšzi*

“They place the consecrated meat cuts. Afterward, they are the consecrated meat cuts.”

Because placing food on a divine table is insufficient to make it consecrated, as mentioned above, it is worth checking the online photograph of the tablet ([hethiter.net/:fotarchBoFN00970](http://hethiter.net/:fotarchBoFN00970)). While so doing, we realize that there is no space between PA and E, that there is an erased sign right after EŠ and that the ZI sign is far apart on the edge and partly erased. This is a clear erasure. Hence, the whole section should read *šuppaēš* {x ZI} and I suspect that it qualifies the pots mentioned immediately on the next line.<sup>9</sup> Therefore, I suggest reading and translating the passage in the following way:

*šuppa tianzi* EGIR=ŠU *šuppaēš* {ZI} DUGÚTUL<sup>HÁ</sup> *tianzi warpa danzi*

“They place the consecrated meat cuts. Afterward, they place the consecrated pots; they surround (them).”

KBo 4.11 obv. 13-14 (CTH 772: Festival from Ištanuwa, NS; HFR-Team, [hethiter.net/:HFR-Basicorpus](http://hethiter.net/:HFR-Basicorpus) KBo 4.11 (2021-12-31))

Now focusing on the fate of the consecrated food, one particular Hittite text is usually quoted (see last de Martino 2004, 350). This is Kantuzzili’s prayer, which states:

*šiuni=mi=ma=mu kuit šuppi adanna natta ara n=at UL kuššanka edun nu=za tuekka=(m)man natta paprahun*

“I never ate what (is) consecrated to my god (and) forbidden for me to eat, so that I did not defile my person.”

KUB 30.10 obv. 13'-14' (CTH 373: Kantuzzili’s prayer, MS; Mouton 2016, 554–5)

Another text in which consecrated food is mentioned is a paragraph of the Hittite Laws in which we read:

*takku āppatriwanzi kuišk[i (p)]aizzi (dupl. pāizzi) ta šullatar iēzzi naššu* NINDA<sup>HÁ</sup> *haršin našma* GIŠ.GEŠTIN<sup>HÁ</sup> *išpanduzi* (dupl. GEŠTIN<sup>HÁ</sup> *išpant[u-...]) ki[n]uzi § ta 1 UDU 10 NINDA<sup>HÁ</sup> 1 DUG<sup>HÁ</sup>KA.DÙ *pāi ta É=ZU EGIR-pa* (dupl. *āppa*) *šuppiyahhi kuitman* MU.KAM-z[a] *mēhuni* (dupl. *mēani*) *ari ta É-i=(š)ši SAG.KI-za harzi**

“If someone goes to confiscate (something) and commits a malicious act, (i.e.) he opens either a thick bread loaf or a libation vessel of wine, § he shall give one sheep, ten loaves of bread (and) one jug and he (i.e. the

<sup>9</sup> Note that the fact that DUGÚTUL can render a Hittite noun in the common gender is attested by the form in common gender *dannaraš* DUGÚTUL-*aš* in KBo 30.2:8’.

victim of confiscation) shall consecrate his house again; until a year's time has passed, he shall keep (the home altar) apart within his house.”

KBo 6.26 i 28-33 and dupl. KBo 25.5 iii 1'-4' (OS), KBo 6.18(+) iv 7-12 (NS) and HFAC 4:6'-7' (NS) (CTH 292: Hittite Laws, NS; Hoffner 1997, 131-2)

This passage is quite informative, since it apparently describes a private cult within a household. It refers to profanation of food offerings by an intruder. The key sentence is the last one, *ta É-i=(š)ši SAG.KI-za harzi*, which is ambiguous. What should the house owner keep apart within his home? Hoffner (1997, 132) translates this last sentence as: “Until [a year's] time has passed he shall preserve inviolate (what is) in his house.”, but it seems farfetched to believe that all the goods inside the house would remain inviolate for a whole year. How would the house owner manage to do that while still living in the house? What might be implied here is more specifically the home altar, i.e. the consecrated space within his house in which he performs his usual sacrifices for his gods, hence the translation suggested above. Thus, although mentioning it, this excerpt does not really tell us anything about the fate of the consecrated food.

Likewise, paragraphs 4' and 5' of the instructions to the temple personnel refer to diverting foodstuffs that are destined to a deity (Miller 2013, 250), but this passage does not specifically deal with consecrated food *per se*, only with “provisions” (*šarā tiyanta*) that are not yet ritually conditioned, in other words not yet consecrated. On the contrary, paragraph 6' of this text seems immediately relevant to this paper, as we shall see below.

Based on Kantuzzili's prayer quoted above, several Hittitologists deduced that sacrificial food—or at least a portion of it—was taboo for mortals. For instance, in his *Geschichte der hethitischen Religion*, Volkert Haas stated:

“The entrails—heart, liver and kidneys—are roasted or grilled, while the other parts of the meat are made into ‘pot dishes’. The former are usually reserved for the gods, while the latter are eaten by the cult participants and the rest of the feasting community.”<sup>10</sup>

A similar idea is expressed by Manfred Hutter in his 2021 book:

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<sup>10</sup> Haas 1994, 657-8: “Die Innereien – Herz, Leber und Nieren – werden gebraten oder gegrillt, während die übrigen Fleischteile zu ‘Topfgerichten’ verarbeitet werden. Die ersteren sind in der Regel den Göttern vorbehalten, die letzteren dienen den Kultakteuren und der übrigen Festgemeinde zum Verzehr.”

“During the sacrifice of meat, or the sacrifices during which a sacrificial animal is killed, the blood, heart and liver, and sometimes the other entrails, are reserved for the gods.”<sup>11</sup>;

and one page further on in the same book:

“The cutting of the sacrificial animal, which follows the slaughter, serves to prepare the sacrificial meat accordingly, in order to prepare the cooked or raw entrails—in addition to the blood collected during the slaughter—for the deity, and the remaining meat of the animal for consumption.”<sup>12</sup>

The texts indeed show that there were holier meat cuts than others, namely the liver and the heart, since they were often treated differently from the other animal body parts on many occasions: either they were kept raw or they were cooked on a grill, whereas the rest of the meat was cooked in a pot (Mouton 2007, 88).<sup>13</sup> However, the texts also show that even those holier meat cuts could be eaten by the human participants after their being offered to the deity. We will examine several testimonies of such a phenomenon below. At least one passage also illustrates the fact that meat cuts cooked in the pot, although not presumably belonging to the holiest category of *šuppa*, could be first offered to the deities after being cooked in the pot. This excerpt states (**Excerpt no. 1**):

[n]=ašta UZU<sup>U</sup>muhharain UZU<sup>U</sup>wallaš haštai IŠTU DUG<sup>U</sup>ÚTUL daškanzi n=at ANA DINGIR-LIM EGIR-pa tianzi  
TU<sup>7</sup>ARŠANNU=ma=za TU<sup>7</sup>.UZU-i UL kuiški udāi n=at=za adanna ANA PANI DINGIR-LIM ēššantari

“They take the *muhrai*-body part (and) the shank bone from the pot and they place them back (before) the deity, but no one brings the groat soup (to mix) in the meat stew. They sit before the deity to eat it.”

KBo 2.14 iv 2'-12' (CTH 638: Festival for Telepinu, NS; HFR-Team, hethiter.net/:HFR-Basiscorpus KBo 2.14 (2021-12-31))

Note that some meat cuts are retrieved from the pot in which a meat stew is being cooked and these meat cuts are placed back on the divine table. Afterward, this meat might end up as food for the human participants in the ceremony. If this interpretation is correct, this human consumption occurs in the presence of the divine guest.

<sup>11</sup> Hutter 2021, 230: “Bei Fleischopfern beziehungsweise den Opfern, bei denen ein Opfertier getötet wird, sind Blut, Herz und Leber sowie manchmal auch die anderen Innereien den Göttern vorbehalten.”

<sup>12</sup> Hutter 2021, 231: “Die auf die Schlachtung folgende Zerteilung des Opfertieres dient dazu, das Opferfleisch entsprechend bereitzustellen, um die gekochten beziehungsweise rohen Innereien – neben dem bei der Schlachtung aufgesammelten Blut – für die Gottheit, das restliche Fleisch des Tieres für den Verzehr vorzubereiten.”

<sup>13</sup> As far as I know, the Hittite texts do not explain the origin(s) of this differentiation among the *šuppa*.



In a series of articles on Hittite animal sacrifice (Mouton 2004; 2005; 2008), I also argued that the term *šuppa* “consecrated meat cuts” actually included almost the entirety of the animal body.<sup>14</sup> In other words, the heart and liver were far from being the only *šuppa*. As a reminder, here is an illustration of this phenomenon. This is a sequence from the KI.LAM festival:

[Š]A 10 GU<sub>4</sub><sup>HÁ</sup> ŠA 38 UDU<sup>HÁ</sup> [š]uppa=šmit UZU<sup>U</sup>SAG.DU<sup>MEŠ</sup> [UZ]U<sup>U</sup>GIR<sup>MEŠ</sup> UZU<sup>U</sup>GABA<sup>HÁ</sup>=ŠUNU UZU<sup>U</sup>ZAG.LU  
[U]ZU<sup>U</sup>muhharauš=(š)muš [UZ]U<sup>U</sup>ŠÀ=ŠUNU UZU<sup>U</sup>ÉLLAG.GÜN<sup>MEŠ</sup>=ŠUNU [UZU]U<sup>U</sup>.G]U<sub>4</sub><sup>HÁ</sup>=ŠUNU U<sup>U</sup>ZU<sup>U</sup>}.UDU=ŠUNU

“The [co]nsecrated meat cuts [o]f ten bovinds (and) of thirty-eight sheep, (namely their) heads, feet, their breasts, shoulder(s), their *muhrai*-body parts, their hearts, their ‘colorful kidneys’, their [*bee*]-[*fat*] and their sheep-fat.”

KBo 10.31 iii 31-35 (CTH 627: KI.LAM festival, NS; Singer 1984, 103–4)

As is often the case in the festival texts, this list details what is meant in this context by “consecrated meat cuts”, and we can observe that several parts of the animal victim belong to this category in the eyes of the practitioner.

After my studies on Hittite sacrifice published between 2004 and 2019 (Mouton 2004; 2005; 2006; 2007; 2008; 2017; 2019), Rita Francia also briefly mentioned the fact that human consumption of sacrificial food was possible, but she wrote:

“(…) the meat of the victim was generally not consumed because the sacrifice had a cathartic purpose, although rarely it could happen that it was eaten, as a few examples attest.”<sup>15</sup>

This paper will show that there are more than a few examples of this phenomenon. This research was mainly built on searching for the Hittite verb *ed-/ad-* “to eat” in ritual and festival texts. For the sake of prudence, only the sufficiently preserved passages are selected here. As clearly expressed in the title of this paper, only solid food will be considered. Sacrificial beverages are certainly also worth studying, but might be the object of another study. Only the excerpts that specifically illustrate human consumption or non-consumption of consecrated food will be provided with a number, so that the reader may find them back in the summary table at the end of this article.

We will first examine various cases of human consumption of consecrated food in two particular settings: 1) during ceremonial banquets; 2) as payment during festive ceremonies. Then we will address the question of prohibition of human consumption of consecrated food in

<sup>14</sup> On the archaeological evidence of Hittite butchery in ritual context, see Popkin 2013.

<sup>15</sup> Francia 2017, 33: “(…) le carni della vittima generalmente non erano consummate, poiché il sacrificio aveva un fine catartico, tuttavia, suppur raramente, poteva accadere che venissero mangiate, come pochi esempi attestano.” This fact is also briefly noted by Hagenbuchner-Dresel 2003, 303–4.

two distinct configurations: 1) when this prohibition regards all human participants; 2) when it applies only to some of the human participants.

## I. Human Consumption of Consecrated Food

A vast group of texts attest that *a posteriori* human consumption of consecrated food, i.e. the food offered in sacrifice to the deities, is not only possible but also the norm.

### I.1. During Ceremonial Banquets

During cultic banquets, human consumption of sacrificial food is frequent. Several texts are quite vague on the modalities of this phenomenon, as is the case in a MS text of the AN.TAH.ŠUM festival (**Excerpt no. 2**):

[... <sup>NINDA</sup>ān NINDA.K]U<sub>7</sub> <sup>NINDA</sup>šiluhan ANA <sup>D</sup>IŠTAR <sup>URU</sup>Hatt[arina <sup>D</sup>Ninatta <sup>D</sup>Kul]itta paršiya n=at arha adanz[i]  
 “He (i.e. the AZU-practitioner) crumbles [a loaf of warm bread, swe]et [bread] (and) a *šiluha*-bread to Šawoška of Hatt[arina, Ninatta (and) Kul]itta and then they eat them entirely.”

KBo 51.127+ iii 16'-17' w. par. KUB 51.86:14'-16' (CTH 615: AN.TAH.ŠUM festival, MS; HFR-Team, hethiter.net:/HFR-Basiscorpus KBo 51.127+ (2021-12-31))

The identity of the human consumers is not specified. This might have been self-evident for the AZU-practitioner responsible for this sequence. The human consumers are called “the men” during a festival celebrated by a prince (**Excerpt no. 3**):

<sup>UZU</sup>NÍG.GIG=ma=kan kue āšzi nu LÚ <sup>URU</sup>Durmitta <sup>NINDA</sup>ziggawanin 1 <sup>NINDA</sup>ān 1 NINDA.GÚG 1 <sup>DUG</sup>huppar KAŠ udai  
 n=at DUMU.LUGAL paršiya n=ašta kuēz=(zi)ya peran arha tepu paršiya n=at=šan <sup>LÚ</sup>GUDU<sub>12</sub> <sup>D</sup>U EGIR-pa  
 ištanani dāi § 1 NINDA.SIG<sup>MEŠ</sup> arha šarranzi šer=(r)a=(š)šan <sup>UZU</sup>NÍG.GIG zikkanzi nu hūmanti pianzi LÚ<sup>MEŠ</sup>  
 aranteš adanzi

“(Concerning) the liver(s) that remain,<sup>16</sup> the man of Durmitta brings a *ziggawani*-bread loaf, one loaf of warm bread, one loaf of GÚG-bread (and) a bowl of beer. The prince crumbles it (i.e. the bread), he crumbles off a bit of each at the outset<sup>17</sup> and then the anointed priest of the Storm-god puts it back on the altar. § They share one (set of) unleavened bread loaves and they place the liver(s) on top. Then they give (them) to everyone; the men eat standing.”

IBoT 1.10+ ii 4-12 (CTH 647: Festival celebrated by a prince, NS; Taracha 2017, 38–39 and HFR-Team, hethiter.net:/HFR-Basiscorpus IBoT 1.10+ (2021-12-31))

<sup>16</sup> Many thanks to the anonymous reviewer for suggesting to interpret this clause in this way.

<sup>17</sup> CHD P, 182 *sub parš-*.

According to this passage, the men seem to stand near the altar. Therefore, they might be sharing a meal with the deity. As is often the case, the transition between the symbolic divine consumption of the consecrated food and the human consumption of the same food is barely mentioned. We will return to this aspect below. Divine and human consumption of the same consecrated food might occur almost immediately one after the other (first divine and then human), as seems to be the case during the *haššumaš*-festival (**Excerpt no. 4**):

ŠA GU<sub>4</sub> UDU<sup>HÁ</sup>=ya UZUNÍG.GIG<sup>HÁ</sup> UZUGABA<sup>HÁ</sup> [UZUZA]G.LU UZUSAG.DU<sup>HÁ</sup> GÌR<sup>MES</sup>=ya KUŠ.GU<sub>4</sub> KUŠ.UDU<sup>HÁ</sup> šuppa ANA PANI NINDA.GUR<sub>4</sub>.RA<sup>HÁ</sup> per]an tianzi [nu<sup>?</sup>] UZUNÍG.GIG<sup>HÁ</sup> zanuwanzi nu=kan kue xxx [...] kuranzi [nu=(š)š]an EGIR-pa hūmandāš DINGIR<sup>MES</sup>-naš tianz[i n]u KAŠ marnuan [šipan]ti nu <sup>p</sup>Ariniddun hūmanduš=(š)a DINGIR<sup>MES</sup>-uš irhaizzi š apē=ma UZUNÍG.GIG<sup>HÁ</sup> U 1 NINDA ān 1 NINDA LABKU=ya arha paršīyan[nai] nu hūmantiya parā pianzi n=at adanzi KAŠ=ya=kan akuwanzi

“They place before the loaf[es] of thick bread (which have been placed at the hearth) the livers, chests, [sho]ulder, heads and feet (as well as) the ox- and sheep-skin,<sup>18</sup> (i.e.) the consecrated meat cuts of the bovid and of the sheep. They cook the livers. Those who cut [...] place (them) back (before) all the deities. He (i.e. the prince) [liba]tes beer (and) *marnuwan*-beer and he treats ritually Ariniddu and all the deities one by one. § [He] crumbles off those livers and one loaf of warm bread as well as one soft bread. They also give (some) to each, so that they eat them. They also drink the beer.”

IBoT 1.29 Obv. 43-49 (CTH 633: *haššumaš*-festival, MS?; Mouton 2011, 7–8 and 14)

Sometimes the identity of the human consumers of the divine food is specified in the text, as in the following passage of a fragmentary festival text (**Excerpt no. 5**):

[I]ukkatta DUMU É.GAL PANI GÍŠNÁ šipanti [nu] šuppa GAL.GEŠTIN 7 NINDA.GUR<sub>4</sub>.RA šarā dāi LÚ.MES<sup>?</sup> hilammiēš kuiēš kuiēš warpanteš [š]uppa arha adanzi GAL.GEŠTIN=ya=kan arha [akuw]anzi

“The day after, the palace official libates before the bed. He takes up the consecrated meat cuts, the cup of wine (and) the seven loaves of thick bread; whatever *hilammi*-men (are) bathed eat entirely the consecrated meat cuts. They also [drin]k up the cup of wine.”

KBo 20.51+ i 14'-18' (CTH 694: Fragment of text of a festival for Huwaššanna, MS; HFR-Team, hethiter.net/:HFR-Basiscorpus KBo 14.88+ (2021-12-31))

Only the *hilammi*-men who are bathed seem to be allowed to eat the consecrated meat. Divine consumption seems to have occurred during the night, since the text specifies that human

<sup>18</sup> Cow skin is edible and actually eaten today in several countries around the world: <https://www.thedailymeal.com/eat/5-ways-animal-skin-eaten-around-world/>. Mutton skin is eaten in East India today, for instance: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i8VhCevUV-g> (both sources consulted on July 7th, 2023).

consumption of the same food happens on the day after. This interpretation, as I have already suggested before (Mouton 2017, 249), is actually supported by several texts, as we shall see below.

Before turning to this aspect, it is also worth observing that the king and queen are sometimes explicitly mentioned among the happy few who are allowed to eat the consecrated food, as is the case in CTH 630 (**Excerpt no. 6**):

*nu* GA.KU<sub>7</sub> *šuppīn*=(*n*)*a* UDU-*un* *kuin* *zanuwandan* ANA EZEN<sub>4</sub> <sup>P</sup>*š*[*N*] LUGAL-*i* *adanna* *zikkanzi* *n*=*an*  
<sup>U</sup>MUHALDIM-*aš* LUGAL-*i* MUNUS.LUGAL-*ri*=*y*[*a*] *adanna* *dāi*

“The sweet milk and consecrated (and) cooked sheep that they place for the king to eat during the festival of the Moon-god, the cook places them for the king an[d] queen to eat.”

KBo 21.85+ iv 22'-24' (CTH 630: Month- and thunder festival, MS; HFR-Team, hethiter.net/:HFR-Basiscorpus KUB 32.135+ (2021-12-31))

The “consecrated sheep” is most probably the sheep that is mentioned earlier in the text and whose liver and heart have been put on the divine table. However, the text does not specify what parts of the sacrificial sheep the royal couple are supposed to eat. It might have been obvious to the practitioners or it might have been up to the king and queen themselves to choose.

Returning to the symbolic divine consumption of the consecrated food, several texts refer to the night as the time for this phenomenon to happen. CTH 390 is one of them (**Excerpt no. 7**):

*nu*=*kan* <sup>UDU</sup>*iyantan* *arkanzi* *n*=*aš*<sup>U</sup>*ta* <sup>UZU</sup>*huišu* *šuppa* *danzi* KUŠ.UDU <sup>UZU</sup>GABA ZAG *PĀNI* DINGIR-LIM *tianzi* § EGIR-*anda*=*ma* <sup>UZU</sup>NÍG.GIG *happinit* *zanuwanzi* *nu* 1 NINDA.GUR<sub>4</sub>.RA *inanaš* <sup>P</sup>UTU-*i* *paršiya* *šer*=(*r*)*a*=(*š*)*šan*  
<sup>UZU</sup>NÍG.GIG *kuerzi* *n*=*at* *hūišaš* *šuppaš* *šer* *dāi* *nu* IŠTU <sup>DUG</sup>KŪKUB *PANI* DINGIR-LIM *šipanti* *nu* *kiššan* *tēmi* §  
*inanaš* <sup>P</sup>UTU-*i* *zik* *azzikke* *akkuške* *nu* *edani* DUMU-*li* *inan* EGIR-*an* *arha* *karaš* § *nu* *šuppa* *PANI* DINGIR-LIM  
*šešzi* *lukkadda*=*ma*=*at* *šarā* *dahhi* *n*=*ē* *arha* *adanzi*

“They *skin* a sheep and they take the raw consecrated meat cuts. They place the skin of the sheep (and its) right shoulder before the deity. § Afterward, they cook the liver on the grill. He/she (i.e., the child who is the patient) crumbles one loaf of thick bread for the Sun-god of sickness. He/she cuts the liver on top (of it) and then places it on the raw consecrated meat cuts. He/she makes a libation with a jug before the god, and I say: ‘You, Sun-god of sickness, eat (and) drink! Sever the sickness off that child!’ § The consecrated meat cuts spend the night in front of the deity, but the day after I remove them and they eat them entirely.”

KUB 7.1+ i 9-18 (CTH 390: Ritual of Ayatarša, Wattiti and Šuššumaniga, NS; F. Fuscagni (ed.), hethiter.net/:CTH 390 (INTR 2017-03-06), § 4-7)

In my opinion, the end of this excerpt refers to the night as the time of the symbolic divine consumption of the *šuppa*. The human participants have to wait for the day after before eating these same *šuppa*. This divine consumption at night is probably also referred to in a fragment of a festival text (**Excerpt no. 8**):

GE<sub>6</sub>-anti=ma ANA DINGIR-LIM hazziwi ēšzi<sup>UZU</sup> šuppa kue ANA DINGIR-LIM peran kittari n=at zanuanzi nu<sup>LU</sup> GUDU<sub>12</sub> parduhhaš tapišanan dāi nu ištanani peran 1=ŠU šipanti § nu<sup>UZU</sup> šuppa arha adanzi

“At night, (there) is a rite for the deity. They cook the consecrated meat cuts that lie before the deity. The anointed priest takes a cup of *parduhha*- and he libates once before the altar. § They eat entirely the consecrated meat cuts.”

VS NF 12.11 iii 13'-17' (CTH 670: Fragment of festival text, NS; HFR-Team, hethiter.net/:HFR-Basiscorpus VSNF 12.11 (2021-12-31))

The nocturnal “rite for the deity” which is briefly mentioned here might very well correspond to the divine consumption of the consecrated food. It implies that the human participants also wait for the day after to retrieve the *šuppa* from the divine table, cook them and then eat them up.

## I.2. As Payment during Festive Ceremonies

Let us now turn to the second set of circumstances in which human consumption of consecrated food is mentioned, namely as payment of some of the human participants in the rituals or ceremonies.<sup>19</sup> Consumption *per se* is not always explicitly described, but it is expected in many cases, as in a fragmentary festival text (**Excerpt no. 9**):

n=at ANA<sup>LU</sup> SANGA<sup>DU</sup>.GUR GAM-an pānzi nu=šmaš<sup>LU</sup> SANGA<sup>DU</sup>.GUR<sup>UZU</sup> NÍG.GIG pāi aruwanzi ta appianzi

“They go into the presence of the SANGA-priest of<sup>DU</sup>.GUR, so that the SANGA-priest of<sup>DU</sup>.GUR gives them the liver; they bow and then they are finished.”

KUB 56.47 iii? 5'-9' (CTH 670: Fragment of festival text, NS; HFR-Team, hethiter.net/:HFR-Basiscorpus KUB 56.47 (2021-12-31))

The identity of “they” cannot be deduced from the fragmentary passage preceding this excerpt. However, the fact that the priest of<sup>DU</sup>.GUR gives them the liver implies that they will eat it together. This liver is definitely a *šuppa* although the context is missing. The fact that a

<sup>19</sup> On remuneration of ritual and ceremony practitioners, see Hutter 2019.

consecrated liver is first sacrificed to a deity and then eaten by a mortal as payment is illustrated by several texts,<sup>20</sup> among which a sequence of a thunder festival (**Excerpt no. 10**):

UGULA <sup>LÚ.MEŠ</sup>MUHALDIM <sup>UZU</sup>NÍG.GIG [*u*]dai kuttas̄ pera[n šiuni<sup>2</sup> d]āi haššī dāi kuršaš peran dāi halmaššuit[*i* dāi lut]tiya dāi hattaluwaš GIŠ-i dāi namma haššī dāi (...) § LUGAL-uš aruwāizzi <sup>LÚ</sup>MUHALDIM <sup>UZU</sup>NÍG.GIG [LUGAL-i par]ā ēpzi LUGAL-uš QĀTAM dāi t=ašta parā ud[ai t]a <sup>LÚ</sup>SAGI pāi

“The chief of the cooks [b]rings the liver. He places (it) before the walls [*for the deity*]; he places (it) at the hearth; he places (it) before the *kurša*-bag; [he places] (it) at the throne; he places (it) at the [win]dow; he places (it) at the doorbolt. Then he places (it) at the hearth (again). (...) [beverages are referred to in the cut text] § The king bows down. A cook holds [for]th the liver [to the king]; the king puts (his) hand (on it) and then he br[ings] (it) forth [a]nd gives (it) to the cupbearer.”

KBo 17.74+ ii 16-18; 24-25 (CTH 631: Thunder festival, MS; Barsacchi 2017, 33 and 42 and HFR-Team, hethiter.net/:HFR-Basiscorpus KBo 17.74+ (2021-12-31))

The fact that the king puts his hand on the liver before giving it as payment to the cupbearer is most probably a way to designate himself as the author of this payment. A parallel to this sequence occurs in a fragment of festival text (**Excerpt no. 11**):

UGULA <sup>LÚ.MEŠ</sup>MUHALDIM ŠA QĀTI <sup>UZU</sup>NÍG.GIG LUGAL-i parā ēpzi LUGAL-uš QĀTAM dāi t=at ANA <sup>LÚ</sup>NAR ŠA GIŠ.DINANNA.TUR pāi

“The chief of the cooks of the hand<sup>21</sup> holds forth the liver to the king; the king puts (his) hand (on it) and then he gives it (i.e. the liver) to the musician of the small lyre.”

KUB 28.91+ vi 13-14 w. par. KBo 46.96 Rev. 3-4 (CTH 744: Fragment of festival text with Hattic words, NS; HFR-Team, hethiter.net/:HFR-Basiscorpus KUB 28.91+ (2021-12-31))

The fact that both the cupbearer and the musician in the last two excerpts will eat the liver later is implied and expected. Since they receive the liver as payment, they will certainly not let the meat rot before eating it. The fact that the person being paid in this way takes it away is actually explicitly stated in the following text fragment (**Excerpt no. 12**):

LUGAL-uš arta UGULA <sup>LÚ.MEŠ</sup>MUHALDIM ŠA QĀTI <sup>UZU</sup>NÍG.GIG [LUGAL-i parā ēpzi LUGAL-uš=kan QĀTAM dāi [n]=at=kan UGULA <sup>LÚ.MEŠ</sup>MUHALDIM [pa]rā pēdai [n]=at ANA <sup>LÚ</sup>ZABAR.DAB [pā]i <sup>LÚ</sup>ZABAR.DAB=ma [IN]A É <sup>LÚ</sup>ZABAR.DAB [p]ēda[i]

<sup>20</sup> See also IBoT 2.43 ii 6’ and duplicate KBo 21.102 rev. 6’ where eating the liver in a fragmentary context is mentioned.

<sup>21</sup> The reading <sup>LÚ.MEŠ</sup>MUHALDIM ŠA QĀTI is ascertained by the parallel text. An even closer parallel of this passage is KUB 20.48+ iii’ 4’-8’.

“The king stands (there); the chief of the cooks of the hand holds forth the liver to the [king]. The king puts (his) hand (on it) [and then] the chief of the cooks brings it forth and [giv]es it to the bronze-bowl holder. The bronze-bowl holder takes (it) to the house of the bronze-bowl holder.”

IBoT 4.59 i 3'-12' (CTH 670: Fragment of festival text, NS; HFR-Team, hethiter.net/:HFR-Basiscorpus IBoT 4.59 (2021-12-31))

In the examples we have examined, it is the liver of the sacrificial animal which is given as payment. This shows that, although being holy when it is placed before the deity, it is not taboo to the mortals after the deity has symbolically eaten it. I suspect this practice to be quite common and no exceptional case. Other sacrificial foodstuff can also be given as payment after it has been offered to the deity. Sacrificial bread can definitely be used in this way, as is shown in the following passage of a festival text (**Excerpt no. 13**):

UGULA LÚ<sup>GIŠ</sup>BANŠUR=[ma=ka]n anda paizzi nu=ka[n I]ŠTU<sup>GIŠ</sup>BANŠUR DINGIR-LIM 1<sup>NINDA</sup>wagata[n] dāi n=an ANA<sup>LÚ.MEŠ</sup>SIMUG.A<sup>URU</sup> Arinna pāi

“The chief of the table-men goes in. He takes one bread-to-bite from the divine table and he gives it to the smiths of Arinna.”

KUB 2.6 v 36-40 (CTH 598: Winter festival for the Sun-goddess of Arinna, NS; HFR-Team, hethiter.net/:HFR-Basiscorpus KUB 2.6 (2021-12-31))

Sometimes the time lapse necessary for the divine consumption of the consecrated food is briefly mentioned in this context, as in the text of the so-called ritual for the Storm-god of Kuliwišna (**Excerpt no. 14**):

nu NINDA LABGA arha paršiya n=an=šan haššī dāi n=ašta haššan arahzanda šīenit GUL-ašzi n=aš=kan parā uizzi lukkatta 1 NINDA LABGA<sup>LÚ.MEŠ</sup>MUHALDIM šarā danzi n=an arha adanzi

“He (i.e. the house owner? *BĒL É-TIM*) crumbles off soft bread and he places it on the hearth. He draws (a circle) with beer around the hearth and then he comes forth. The day after, the cooks take up one loaf of soft bread and then they eat it entirely.”

KBo 15.34+ ii 7'-10' (CTH 330: Ritual for the Storm-god of Kuliwišna, NS; HFR-Team, hethiter.net/:HFR-Basiscorpus KBo 38.161+ (2021-12-31))

Once more, the sacrificial bread is shared between several participants of the ceremony. The following excerpt is even more detailed on that aspect (**Excerpt no. 15**):

[<sup>D</sup>ZA]BABA<sup>D</sup>Halmaššuiitti[n GUB-aš IŠT]U GAL ekuzi<sup>GIŠ</sup>INANNA.GAL SÌR-R[U NINDA.GUR4.RA<sup>?</sup> parš]iya n=an=kan wāki nu=za<sup>LÚ</sup>SAG[1 ½ dāi] ½=ma=za<sup>LÚ</sup>NAR-aš dāi

“[While standing], he (i.e. the prince) drinks (to) the [W]ar-god (and) Halmaššuit [wit]h a cup. They play the great lyre(s). He [crum]bles [a loaf of *thick* bread] and takes a bite at it. Then the cupbear[er takes a half (of it)] for himself, whereas the musician takes (the other) half for himself.”

KBo 30.88+ iii 5-8 (CTH 647: Festival celebrated by a prince, MS; Groddek 2002a, 126–7, Taracha 2017, 46 and HFR-Team, hethiter.net/:HFR-Basiscorpus KBo 30.86+ (2021-12-31))

As already mentioned by Hutter (2019, 39), the expression *-za da-* “to take for oneself” is sometimes associated with self-payment in-kind of ritual or ceremonial practitioners. Hutter gave several examples of this phenomenon, to which we may add a passage in the *šalliš waštaiš* ceremony (**Excerpt no. 16**):

*mah[h]an=ma waganna appāi [n]=ašta AL[AM] MUNUS.MEŠ[*tapd*]araš É-erza parā [ud]āi nu=kan ēzza[n] ěhi[lamni] anda warnuwa[n]zi nu kī katta[n] wa[rnuw]anzi 1-NUTIM [TÚG.N]ÍG.LÁM<sup>MEŠ</sup> 1 DUG Ì.DÙG.GA=y[a] namma 1 GU<sub>4</sub> 8 [U]DU<sup>HÁ</sup>=ya aw[a]n katta haddanzi nu 1 DUG GEŠTIN 1 DUG KAŠ duwarnanz[i] namma=at=kan<sup>MUNUS.MEŠ</sup> *tapd*[ar]aš arahzand[a] wahnuzzi nu [1<sup>NINDA</sup>]ān 1 NINDA.GUR<sub>4</sub>.RA GA.KIN.AK<sup>P</sup>UTU-i menahhanda paršiyanzi n=at=šan<sup>GIŠ</sup> BANŠ[UR-i] tianzi nu<sup>MUNUS</sup>ŠU.GI [GIDI]M-ti SAHAR<sup>HÁ</sup>-uš šarā dā[i] nu SAG.DU<sup>MEŠ</sup> ANŠE.KUR.RA<sup>MEŠ</sup> S[AG.DU]<sup>MEŠ</sup> GU<sub>4</sub><sup>HÁ</sup> kuwapi wara[ndat] n=aš apiya pē[danzi NINDA]<sup>HÁ</sup>=ma=[za] MUNUS<sup>ŠU.GI</sup> dā[i]*

“Wh[e]n the biting is over (i.e., the rite during which one gives something to eat to the deceased and to other entities), the female [mour]ners [br]ing the im[age] (i.e. the image of the deceased) outside the building and they burn stra[w] inside the gat[e-house]. Alongside, they burn the following: one set of fine [cl]othes and one jug of fine oil. Furthermore, they slaughter down one ox and eight [sh]eep. They break one jug of wine (and) one jug of beer. Then the female mour[n]ers turn them (i.e. the potsherds) all around. They crumble [one loaf] of warm [bread], one loaf of thick bread (and) cheese before the Sun-god, and they place them on a tab[le]. The Old Woman take[s] up the ashes for the [deceas]ed and [they] bri[ng] them where the heads of horses and the h[ead]s of oxen were bur[nt]. However, the Old Woman take[s] the [loav]es [of bread for herself].”

KUB 30.25+ obv. 9-21 (CTH 450: Royal funerary ritual, NS; Kassian et al. 2002, 322–3)

The restoration is ascertained by another sequence in the same ceremony during Day 8:

NINDA.GUR<sub>4</sub>.RA=ma=za ŠA 1 ŠĀTI<sup>MUNUS</sup>ŠU.GI dāi

“However, the Old Woman takes the thick bread of one *SŪTU*-measure for herself.”

KUB 30.24+ ii 7 (CTH 450: Royal funerary ritual, LNS; Kassian et al. 2002, 384–5)

Another illustration of a similar sequence can be found in the AN.TAH.ŠUM-festival (**Excerpt no. 17**):



[m]ān lukkatta É<sup>D</sup>Ziparwā haššanzi n=at=kan anda pānzi nu DUMU É.GAL kuiuš NINDA.GUR<sub>4</sub>.RA<sup>HÁ</sup> ANA<sup>D</sup>Ziparwa U ANA DINGIR<sup>MEŠ</sup> paršiyannit<sup>MUNUSŠU.GI<sup>HÁ</sup></sup>=ya kuiuš NINDA.GUR<sub>4</sub>.RA<sup>HÁ</sup> EGIR DUMU É.GAL paršiyannir § n=aš ANA DINGIR<sup>MEŠ</sup> peran arha danz[i] n=aš=za<sup>MUNUS.MEŠŠU.GI</sup>=pat d[a]nzi

“[W]hen (it is) the next day, they open the temple of Ziparwa and they go in. The loaves of thick bread that the palace official has crumbled for Ziparwa and the (other) deities and the loaves of thick bread that the Old Women have crumbled after the palace official, they take them away from before the gods and the Old Women alone t[a]ke them for themselves.”

KUB 20.8+ i 1-8 (CTH 610: AN.TAH.ŠUM festival, NS; HFR-Team, hethiter.net/:HFR-Basiscorpus KBo 22.122+ (2021-12-31))

The sacrificial origin of the Old Women’s payment, i.e. the consecrated bread earlier offered to Ziparwa, is undeniable in this excerpt. We have seen that consecrated meat cuts may end up as payment to ritual or ceremonial participants. A small variation on this theme occurs in the ritual of Anniwiyanni (**Excerpt no. 18**):

n=ašta MÁŠ.GAL<sup>D</sup>LAMMA innarauwanti šipanti namma=an=šan<sup>GIŠ</sup>lahhurnuzi šarā hukanzi n=ašta ZAG-an<sup>UZU</sup>GEŠTU-an kuranzi n=at IZI-it zanuwanzi n=at=šan ANA NINDA.GUR<sub>4</sub>.RA<sup>HÁ</sup> šer tianzi § namma<sup>UZU</sup>NÍG.GIG<sup>UZU</sup>ŠÀ ZAG-an<sup>UZU</sup>ZAG-AN IZI-it zanuwanzi n=at=šan ANA DINGIR-LIM EGIR-pa tianzi § MÁŠ.GAL=ma=kan hūmandan markanzi n=an<sup>LÚ.MEŠ</sup>MUŠEN.DÙ arha adanzi namma EGIR-anda<sup>D</sup>LAMMA innarauwan[dan] GUB-aš 3=ŠU akuwanzi

“She (i.e. the ritual expert) dedicates a ram to the *innarawant*- Tutelary deity. Then, they slaughter it on top of leaves. They cut off (its) the right ear, they cook it with fire and then they place it on top of loaves of thick bread. § Then they cook with fire the liver, the heart, the right shoulder and then they place them back before the deity. § They dismember the whole ram and then the augurs eat it entirely. Then afterward they drink three times (to) the *innarawant*- Tutelary deity while standing.”

VBOT 24 ii 34-45 (CTH 393: Ritual of Anniwiyanni, NS; D. Bawanypeck (ed.), hethiter.net/:CTH 393 (INTR 2016-03-31))

Here the text seems to indicate that the augurs do not eat the meat cuts that have been placed before the deity, but rather the other parts of the animal’s body. Note, however, that even these other body parts are consecrated, since the whole ram has first been dedicated to the deity; in other words, the whole victim is consecrated to the divine, not only the limbs that are listed in this passage. Therefore, the augurs are being paid through their consumption of consecrated food, just like the previous excerpts we have examined. A fragmentary ritual text shows an even more peculiar configuration (**Excerpt no. 19**):

ŠAH.TUR-an dahhi n=an É.ŠÀ-na anda pēdahhi n=an<sup>MUNUS.MEŠ</sup>SUHUR.LÁ adanzi haštae=ma ANA É MUHALDIM pēdanzi n=at happariyami

“I<sup>22</sup> take the piglet and I lead it into the inner chamber. The female attendants eat it, but they bring the bones to the house of the cook and I sell them.”

KUB 17.28 i 22-24 (CTH 730: Exorcism with Hattic, NS; Collins 2006, 165)

This piglet is mentioned before in the text, which specifies that its gender depends on that of the patient—in this context, a child. This identification of gender is very common in the context of substitution rituals, which means that this piglet first functioned as the ritual substitute of the patient. The text states that the piglet is pegged down and then presented to the Sun-goddess of the earth. A presentation such as this equates with a dedication to the divine. As already argued elsewhere (Mouton 2014), using an animal as a ritual substitute is not incompatible with using it as a sacrificial victim afterward. In other words, an animal substitute may be symbolically eaten by the divine recipient at a later stage of the ritual. This passage shows that the animal ends up with yet a third function, namely that of payment and food for the female attendants. This compares with the scapegoat-sheep that the Old Woman takes for herself in the ritual of *Maštigga* (Hutter 2019, 39).

## II. Prohibition of Human Consumption of Consecrated Food

Now that we have examined the main contexts of human consumption of consecrated food, let us study the opposite situation, namely the prohibition of human consumption of that food.

### II.1. For All Human Participants

Sometimes the prohibition seems to apply to all, as is the case in a passage of the ritual of expansion of the cult of the goddess of the night. A sheep is dedicated to the goddess for conciliation and then slaughtered above a hole in the ground. The sheep’s blood is used to smear the goddess’s effigy, as well as all her belongings and the wall of the new temple, “so that the new goddess and (her) temple are consecrated” (*nu DINGIR [GIBI]L É DINGIR-LIM=ya šuppešzi*), states the text. Then the text adds (**Excerpt no. 20**):

<sup>UZU</sup>1=*ma arha warāni UL=at kuiški ēzzazzi*

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<sup>22</sup> I.e. the ritual expert in charge of this ritual.

“The (sheep’s) fat is entirely burnt; no one shall eat it.”<sup>23</sup>

KUB 29.4+ iv 40-41 (CTH 481: Ritual of expansion of the cult of the goddess of the night, NS; Miller 2004, 297 and Mouton 2016, 372–3)

This is in contrast to other ritual sequences that the Hittite texts describe, such as that of Tunnawiya’s *taknaz dā*-ritual during which the fat of a billy goat is warmed up and then eaten by all the human participants.<sup>24</sup> We have also seen another example of this above.<sup>25</sup> Returning to the ritual for the goddess of the night, since the cultural context of this ritual is Kizzuwatna, one might think that burning the sheep fat is a way of making a food offering to the goddess, since cremation is a well-attested sacrificial technique in Kizzuwatna (Mouton forthcoming). Furthermore, burning it would prevent humans from eating it. The fact that the text specifies this procedure might indicate that burning—not simply warming up—the fat of the sacrificial victim was not self-evident for all the ritual experts who might have performed this ritual. Since the text was preserved in Hattuša, where many sacrificial techniques cohabited, such a regional difference might have needed to be specified. In the text of a ritual for Mount Hazzi, we read **(Excerpt no. 21)**:

[1 (SIL)]A<sub>4</sub> 1 NINDA.GUR<sub>4</sub>.RA UPNIANA <sup>D</sup>U kibišši=ya 7 MUŠEN 2 [(SIL)A<sub>4</sub> 1 AMAR]=ya 4 NINDA.GUR<sub>4</sub>.RA<sup>HÁ</sup> ŠÀ.BA 1 NINDA.GUR<sub>4</sub>.RA ŠA 1/2 ŠATI [(3 NINDA)].GUR<sub>4</sub>.RA ŠA 1 UPNI dāhaši=ya duruši=ya punuh[unši=ya] kammirši=ya izzurši=ya kuzurši=ya el[mi=y]a parni=ya āri=ya mudri=ya dāri=ya [...] dupurpuri=ya *nu kē* MUŠEN<sup>HÁ</sup> SILA<sup>HÁ</sup> 1 AMAR=y[a] *šuppaēš UL=aš kuiški ēzzazi*

“[One] lamb, one loaf of thick bread (of one) handful for the throne of the Storm-god. Seven birds, two lam[bs] and [one calf]. Four loaves of thick bread among which one loaf of thick bread of half a *SUTU*-measure (and) three loaves of thick bread of one handful for *virility*, *duruši*, *strengh[th]*, *kammirši*, *izzurši*, *kuzurši*, *oa[th]*, *purity*, *āri*, *mudri*, *dāri*, [...] *dupurpuri*. These birds, lambs an[d] one calf (are) consecrated. No one shall eat them.”

KBo 8.86 i 9-15 and duplicate KBo 8.88 i 13-20 (CTH 785: Ritual for Mount Hazzi, MS; Corti 2017, 4)

Since this sacrificial sequence is clearly associated with Hurrian sacrificial terms, this prohibition concerning the sacrificial animals might be explained in the same way as in the ritual for the goddess of the night: these animals were probably meant to be entirely burnt—and

<sup>23</sup> A parallel is in Bo 5591 rev. 15’ (fragmentary context; glossary research in the HFR website): <sup>UZU</sup> UL *kuiški ēzzaz[i]*.

<sup>24</sup> KUB 55.45 ii 14 (Groddek 2002b, 81): [...=m]a <sup>UZU</sup> zeari n=at pankuš arha ēzzai.

<sup>25</sup> KUB 17.28 iii 4-15.

not cooked—as *ambašše*, i.e. burnt sacrifice, hence the taboo for the human participants of the ritual to eat them.

Other cases of prohibition of consecrated food are very fragmentary and thus cannot be further commented on.<sup>26</sup>

## II.2. For Only Some of the Human Participants

Other texts state that eating the consecrated food may be prohibited to only some of the human participants in rituals or ceremonies. This is the case in a ritual for Mount Hazzi (**Excerpt no. 22**):

[na]mma GA.KIN.AK *daškanzi nu* LÚ.arāš LÚ.ari [šiy]aīškezzi nu GA.KIN.AG EMŠU *šuppaēš* [az]zikkanzi *šaknuwanteš=ma UL adanzi UL āra*

“[Th]en they take cheese(s) and they [h]url (them) at each other. Then the consecrated (ones) [e]at the bitter cheese, but the impure (ones) shall not eat (them); (it is) not permitted.”

KUB 45.49(+) iv 7-10 (CTH 785: Ritual for Mount Hazzi, NS; HFR-Team, hethiter.net/:HFR-Basiscorpus KUB 45.49 (2021-12-31))

Michele Cammarosano (2014) has studied these cheese fighting sequences and, among other things, has shown that the cheese was first presented, i.e. dedicated to the gods before being distributed to the mortals. This makes it consecrated food, as we have seen earlier with other examples. During a festival for Telepinu, only four SANGA-priests seem to be allowed to eat the consecrated meat cuts that lay before the deity before the following sequence occurs (**Excerpt no. 23**):

4 LÚ.MEŠ.SANGA URU.Kāšha IGI<sup>HÁ</sup>-wa [I<sub>7</sub>-a nēanzi] n=at ešanta nu UZU.NÍG.GIG<sup>HÁ</sup> ŠĀ<sup>HÁ</sup> danzi n=at adanzi

“Four SANGA-priests of the city of Kāšha [turn] (their) eyes toward the watercourse (where the deity has been washed)<sup>27</sup> and then they sit down. They take the liver[s (and) hearts] and they eat them.”

KUB 58.30+ ii 7'-9' (CTH 638: Festival for Telepinu, MS; HFR-Team, hethiter.net/:HFR-Basiscorpus KBo 54.126+ (2021-12-31))

<sup>26</sup> KBo 55.52 i 3' (CTH 449: Ritual for the underground deities, NS; S. Görke (ed.), hethiter.net/: CTH 449.4 (INTR 2016-03-11)) in fragmentary context: *UL=za UZU ēzzai* “He/she shall not eat the meat.” KUB 44.61 Ro 2 (CTH 461: Medical text, NS; Burde 1974, 18–19) in fragmentary context: *nu NINDA-an UL ēzzazi* “He/she shall not eat bread.” KUB 45.47+ iv 34-35 (CTH 494: Ritual for NIN.GAL, MS; D. Bawanypeck – S. Görke (ed.), hethiter.net/:CTH 494 (INTR 2012-05-09)): *MUNUS.LUGAL=ma DUMU<sup>MEŠ</sup>.LUGAL=ya damai-[...] UL kuiški ēzzazi* “The queen and the princes [...] other [...]. No one shall eat [...]” Other fragmentary passages mentioning no one eating are: KBo 47.55 rev.? 11' (CTH 500) and KBo 27.130 rev. 6' (CTH 473).

<sup>27</sup> KUB 58.30+ ii 4'.

In this type of context, as in the previous excerpt and the following one, eating the consecrated food seems to discriminate the consumers from the other human participants, as a privilege of some sort.<sup>28</sup> This can be compared with the examples that we have seen earlier, in which only some of the mortals received the consecrated food as payment. See also a passage of a festival text involving Hurrian deities (**Excerpt no. 24**):

*nu* L<sup>U</sup>MUHALDIM TU<sub>7</sub> *pittalwan* IŠTU DUG<sup>U</sup>TUL *šarā dāi n=an PANI* L<sup>U</sup>SANGA *dāi n=ašta* UZU<sup>1</sup> *šarā pippai*  
*n=at=šan katta ANA* DUG<sup>D</sup>LIM.GAL.MUŠEN *hand[aiZZi]* § *nu* L<sup>U</sup>MEŠ É*karimnāliš anda ara[ntari]* *n=at PANI*  
 DINGIR-LIM *arha adanzi damaiš=ma UL kuiški ēzzazi*

“The cook takes up the plain stew from the pot and places it before the SANGA-priest. He throws animal fat on top and arrang[es] it next to a bird(-shaped) bowl. § Temple-men stan[d] (there). They eat it entirely before the deity, but no one else shall eat.”

KBo 23.67+ iii 6-12 (CTH 704: List of Hurrian deities in a festival, MS; HFR-Team, hethiter.net/:HFR-Basiscorpus KBo 23.67+ (2021-12-31))

The temple-men are the only ones allowed to eat before the deity, but the preserved text does not attest the consecrated nature of the food they eat. However, I suspect the animal fat originates from a sacrificial victim that might have been mentioned in the fragmentary context before. We have seen parallels of this above. Sometimes the happy few are physically separated from the rest of the mortals before eating, as in a festival for the throne of Hepat (Excerpt no. 25):

*nu=za=kan BĒL SÍSKUR* L<sup>U</sup>NAR L<sup>U</sup>AZU=*ya* G<sup>IS</sup>ZA.LAM.GAR<sup>H<sup>A</sup></sup> *anda adanna ešandari namma=kan tamaiš BĒL*  
 DINGIR-LIM G<sup>IS</sup>ZA.LAM.GAR=*aš adanna anda UL kuiški paizzi PANI* G<sup>IS</sup>ZA.LAM.GAR=*ya INA É-TIM=kan anda*  
*ašanzi adanzi=ma=z ŠA* SILA<sub>4</sub>=*pat* UZU

“The ritual patron, the musician and the AZU-practitioner sit down in the hut<sup>29</sup> for eating. Furthermore, no other ‘deity patron’ goes to eat inside the hut. They sit down inside the house before the hut and they eat only the meat of the lamb.”

KUB 12.11+ iv<sup>2</sup> 11-16 (CTH 701: Toasts for the Throne of Hebat, MS?; HFR-Team, hethiter.net/:HFR-Basiscorpus IBoT 4.85+ (2021-12-31))

<sup>28</sup> About this sequence, see also Gane 2004, 253: “Consumption of the livers and hearts by the four priests of Kašha is secondary, after presentation to the god. I assume that the priests’ right to eat the livers and hearts means that they participate as officiants, rather than simply as offerers. If so, these animal portions would presumably function as perquisites for the priests, their reward as agents in the offering transaction.”

<sup>29</sup> The logogram G<sup>IS</sup>ZA.LAM.GAR designates either a tent or a hut: Popko 1980 and Haas 2003, 174 fn. 58. Most of the Hittite contexts rather seem to confirm the translation “hut”, since they describe a structure made of wood or reed (Popko 1980, 102). For the very common *plurale tantum* of G<sup>IS</sup>ZA.LAM.GAR, see Popko 1980, 101.

The passage does not specify the nature of the food that the persons sitting inside the hut eat, but their spatial isolation is significant in itself. The lamb whose meat may be eaten by “the others” is not mentioned elsewhere in the preserved text, but in cultic context its consecrated nature is possible, as we have seen from other examples. If it is the case, the discrimination between the first group and the second group of persons would be operated mainly through their spatial separation. A similar strategy of ritual seclusion for the dead in the *šalliš waštaiš* has been emphasized elsewhere (Mouton 2018). This use of a hut for separating the most privileged consumers from the rest of the mortals echoes what the Neo- and Late-Babylonian texts describe with curtains (Ermidoro 2015, 130 with prior bibliography).

### Conclusion

If we return to the excerpt of Kantuzzili’s prayer, I think that in this context what is meant is that food that is destined for the divine should not be eaten by a mortal before it has been placed before the divine image. This partially echoes paragraph 19’ of the instructions to the temple personnel:

*mān=ma=kan ŠÀ KASKAL L<sup>U</sup>SIPA.GU<sub>4</sub> [(našma)] L<sup>U</sup>SIPA.UDU maršatar kuiški iyazi n=ašta naššu GU<sub>4</sub>.ŠE [(našma U)]DU.ŠE wahnuzi nu=za=kan happar šarā dāi [(našma=an=za=a)]n=kan kuenzi n=an arha adanzi pedi=ši=ma (dupl. pede=(š)ši=ma) [(makl)]andan tarnanzi n=at išdūwari nu=šmaš=at SAG.DU-[(aš waštul DINGIR<sup>MEŠ</sup>-aš=kan)] ZI-ni (dupl. ZI-aššaš) šanezzin : zūwan dāer*

“If any cowherd or shepherd perpetrates a deception on the road and turns aside a fattened ox or fattened sheep and he sells (it) or kills it, so that they eat it entirely and replace it with a skinny one in its place, (if) it becomes known, that is a capital offense for them. They have taken the fine food of the gods’ choice.”

KUB 13.17 iv 21-25 and duplicate KUB 13.4 iv 61-67 (CTH 264: Instruction to the temple personnel, NS; Miller 2013, 264–5)

Although the animal is not yet ritually consecrated to the divine, it is meant to be and hence diverting it is a serious offense. Even more informative for our inquiry is paragraph 6’ of the same text:

*IŠTU NINDA KAŠ GEŠTIN INA É DINGIR-LIM hūman šarā pē harten (dupl. adds IŠTU) NINDA.GUR<sub>4</sub>.RA DINGIR-LIM=za=kan NINDA.SIG lē kuiški dāliyazi KAŠ=ma=kan GEŠTIN IŠTU GAL-ya (dupl. DUG<sup>i</sup>išpanduzziya) šer arha lē kuiški lāhūi hūman=pat DINGIR-LIM-ni EGIR-pa (dupl. omits EGIR-pa) maniyahten namma=šmaš PANI DINGIR-LIM memian memiešten kuš=wa=kan tuēl DINGIR-LIM-az NINDA haršiyaz [IŠ]TU DUG<sup>i</sup>išpanduziaz dāš nu=war=an=kan DINGIR-LIM EN=YA EGIR-an [iya(hhut)] nu=wa=za=kan apēl (dupl. apēl=(l)a) É-er GAM-an (dupl. kattan) šarā ēpdu § [NINDA KAŠ GEŠTIN=ya=m(a mān apēdani U<sub>4</sub>-ti adanna (dupl. GU<sub>7</sub>-na)*

*akuwanna) tarahteni n=a(t ēzzaten ekutten mān=at UL=ma tarahteni) n=at INA (U4.3.KAM azzikketten akkušketten NINDA<sup>A</sup>piyantallan=ma ANA DAM<sup>MES</sup>=KUNU DUMU<sup>MES</sup>=KUNU SAG.GÉME.İR<sup>MES</sup>=KUNU peš)]teni*

“Deliver everything up into the temple including the bread, beer and wine. No one shall leave for himself the thick bread (or) the unleavened bread of the deity. Equally, no one shall pour beer (or) wine off the top of the libation vessel. Hand absolutely every(thing) back to the deity! Furthermore, tell yourselves (these) word(s) in the presence of the deity: ‘Whoever has taken (something) from your bread (or) from your libation vessel, god, my Lord, [go] after him! May (the deity) seize his house from bottom to top!’ § However, if you can eat and drink [the bread, beer or wine] on that day, then eat (and) drink it! But if you cannot (do) it, eat (and) drink it on the third day. But do not give the donated bread to your wives, children or servants!”

KUB 13.4 i 60'-66' and dupl. KUB 13.5+ ii 1-16 and KUB 40.63 i 8'-19' (CTH 264: Instruction to the temple personnel, NS; Miller 2013, 250–1)

This consecrated food that the priests are allowed to eat either on the same day or on the third day is what the end of the excerpt calls *NINDA<sup>A</sup>piyantalli/a-* “donated bread” (CHD P, 252 *sub NINDA<sup>A</sup>piyantalli/a-*); here, it corresponds to the divine leftovers,<sup>30</sup> as interpreted by the CHD (Š, 236 *sub šarra-*). So I agree with Cammarosano (2018, 153), who writes:

“(…) it can be assumed with a reasonable degree of certainty that the portion of offerings ‘at the altar’ was materially consumed by priests and cult personnel after being dedicated to the gods.”,

although no need to assume it, since the written evidence is there. Evidence can be found in Middle Script and New Script texts referring mainly to the Hatto-Hittite sphere of cultic festivals, although the Lower Land, Kizzuwatna and Arzawa are also represented in the excerpts we have examined. Adding to what Louise Bruit Zaidman (2005, 39) wrote about ancient Greece, I would say that, in Hittite Anatolia, what mattered in sacrifice was both the piety and the swiftness of offerings and thus the abandoning of goods, regardless of their fate. The instructions to the temple personnel emphasize several times the importance of being quick to provide the food offerings to the divine master; they also refer several times to the possibility that human personnel could consume the food offerings later on.<sup>31</sup>

Paying some of the ritual and ceremonial participants with sacrificial food was probably both common practice<sup>32</sup> and a mark of social distinction, as was paying someone with royal votive objects, according to paragraph 8' of the same instruction text to the temple personnel. The only difference is that, with consecrated food, the payment is only allowed once the deity

<sup>30</sup> For Akkadian *rēḫati* “leftovers” in comparable contexts in Neo-Assyrian texts, see Ermidoro 2015, 128 (with prior bibliography).

<sup>31</sup> Besides the passages that I have already quoted in this paper, see Miller 2013, §§ 15' and 18'.

<sup>32</sup> On redistribution of sacrificial meat for payment at the Eanna temple in Uruk in the 1<sup>st</sup> mill. BCE, see Kozuh 2006. On human consumption of sacrificial food during cultic events in Neo-Assyrian Mesopotamia, see Ermidoro 2015. On comparable practices in the Graeco-Roman world, see Hitch 2015, and its bibliography.

has symbolically eaten that food, whereas in the case of a votive object, the payment occurs before the object can be given to the deity.

As we have seen, symbolic divine consumption might be referred to whenever a time lapse is mentioned before the consecrated food is retrieved from before the divine image. Night time seems to be a convenient moment for this, but the written evidence is too limited to systematize this observation. And it is also likely that in other cultic or ritual contexts the time lapse for the symbolic divine consumption of the consecrated food was reduced to nothing. Furthermore, no de-secration of the divine leftovers seemed necessary before they could be eaten by some of the human participants,<sup>33</sup> since the *šuppa* are still designated as such, in other words as “consecrated”, even after they have been offered to the deity and then retrieved from the divine table.<sup>34</sup>

All in all, there was no unique ritual procedure for consuming the divine leftovers, but many, which varied according to the context, the identity of the divine recipient, the nature of the food offering, and so on. In each context not everyone in attendance may have eaten these divine leftovers, either on the spot or later at home. This was exclusive to privileged people among them and eating or not eating consecrated food reflected each person’s place within the community. Here is a chart which lists who was allowed to eat the divine leftovers in the excerpts selected in this paper:

Excerpt no.	Who eats?	Who gives the food?	What food?	In the presence of the deity?
1	“they”	unspecified	meat stew	yes
2	“they”	unspecified	bread	unspecified
3	“the men”	“they”	bread and liver	yes?
4	“they”	“they”	bread and liver	unspecified
5	“bathed <i>hīlammi</i> -men”	the palace official(?)	“consecrated meat cuts”	unspecified

<sup>33</sup> An analogous phenomenon can be observed for the animal substitute becoming a sacrificial victim after the substitution rite is over: no transition seems to be necessary between the two states of the animal (see Mouton 2014). Could the king’s touching the previously consecrated food (as in Excerpts 10 and 11 for example) render it fit for human consumption? Scheid 2007, 267 suggested for ancient Rome: “When the sacrificial offering had been consumed by the flames, thrown into a stream, or disposed of in a pit, the rest of the victim was touched by the sacrificer and so rendered fit for human consumption. The same procedure held for liquid offering and, without doubt, for offerings of produce (porridge, cakes, bread, etc.). Through these gestures, the sacrificer announced that he was not consuming a sacred food, but one that the divinity had, in a sense, agreed to share with him, or had granted to him, according to the principle of reciprocal gift-giving between men and gods.” Since the king’s touching offerings is also a widespread gesture in Hittite religious ceremonies, I suspect that the interpretation of a de-secrating gesture from the king should be discarded for Hittite Anatolia.

<sup>34</sup> This also seems to be the case in ancient Greece, according to Ekroth 2007. In South India, during a sacrificial rite, the food offering is first called “food for the god” when it is presented to the divine image and then it is returned to the devotee as “consecrated food”, which shows that its consecrated state is still valid after its being retrieved by the human participant to the ritual: Eichinger Ferro-Luzzi 1978, 86.



6	the king and queen	cook	“sweet milk and consecrated (and) cooked sheep”	unspecified
7	“they”	ritual expert	“consecrated meat cuts”	unspecified
8	“they”	unspecified	“consecrated meat cuts”	unspecified
9	“they”	SANGA-priest of DU.GUR	liver	no
10	cupbearer	the king	liver	unspecified
11	musician of the small lyre	the king	liver	unspecified
12	bronze-bowl holder	the king and the chief of cooks	liver	no
13	smiths of Arinna	chief of table-men	bread	unspecified
14	cooks(?)	cooks	bread	unspecified
15	prince, cupbearer, musician	prince, cupbearer and musician	bread	no
16	Old Woman	Old Woman	bread	no
17	Old Women	Old Women	bread	no
18	augurs	unspecified	“whole ram”	unspecified
19	female attendants	unspecified	piglet	unspecified
20	no one	irrelevant	sheep’s fat	irrelevant
21	no one	irrelevant	birds, lambs, calf	irrelevant
22	“the consecrated (ones)”	unspecified	cheese	unspecified
23	SANGA-priests	SANGA-priests	livers and hearts	unspecified
24	“temple-men”	unspecified	stew with animal fat	yes

Table I: List of the consumers of consecrated food

Even more privileged were those who both served the divine guest and took a little bit of the consecrated food for themselves, as is shown for the prince in Excerpt no. 15 for example: the prince first crumbles bread for the gods and then takes a bite out of the same bread. Such cases probably illustrate close proximity between these individuals and the divine.<sup>35</sup> Thus, once more, dietary practices or, to put it differently, anthropology of food illustrates power relations within a given society (Mintz/Du Bois 2002 with prior bibliography).

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<sup>35</sup> For a comparable procedure in ritual context, see Mouton 2020, 123–4.

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