

Bring the Boys Back Home After Their Death in Combat During the Neo-Assyrian Period

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Abstract: This paper deals with a topic hardly studied by our fellow scholars: the management of VIP casualties after a victorious battle for the Neo-Assyrians, while the management of the rank and file soldiers has been dealt with in another paper.¹

Keywords: Assyrians, casualties, VIP, victory, home

To my darling boy Henry
Who has left us far too early;
I hope, wherever you are, my baby,
You sleep well and have fun daily.
Amen.
Daddy

1. Introduction

As General of the Army George S. Patton Jr. Said: “It is foolish and wrong to mourn the men who died. Rather, we should thank God that such men lived”. This paper deals with the recovery and packing of VIP casualties after a combat during the Neo-Assyrian period. Thought the proper disposal of dead soldiers was perhaps not considered a priority by the Neo-Assyrian commanders and their allied at all, with the main efforts being concentrated on winning the battles, one can only assume how they would have managed it in some way.

¹ De Backer 2020.

The story of the remains of Shamash-ibni clearly displays that there was, in a way, quite an interest in bringing back some VIP's to bury them in a proper place and give them some rituals, if only for political reasons.

This attempt is mostly hypothetical, using classical sources as Herodotus for what they can offer, with caution, as comparative elements closest to the topic. There is no need to start studying the sources of violence in this paper, for this has been already discussed in another and others scholars in other papers. Here, we start with the body of a dead soldier and try to see what could have been done.

Interviews with funeral undertakers and soldiers coming back from real situations have been used to provide comparative elements as well but, for obvious reasons, no names of people or places will be given.

2. Taking Care of the Dead

The problem was that the enemy surely treated the bodies of the Assyrian officers as they did themselves to the others: cutting their heads, taking their belongings as booty, and / or worst. This would explain why the loss of the body of Sargon in the Tabal, and the possible things the enemy did to, or with, it, gave such a shock to the Assyrian establishment (Fig. 1-23).

Stripping the Corpse

The equipment of particular people, as nobles, specific officers and Chosen Ones, was surely stripped off from their bodies, cleansed, dried, packed and stored somewhere in the luggages of their units, before possibly being sent back home with an escort, perhaps even a letter, and an attendant to the family (Fig. 24).

In specific circumstances, pieces of equipment could have been left with the body, for cultural reasons or because the state of the body did not allow their removal, as was the case in Wisby (Fig. 25-27, 58).²

Repairing the Body

Once, or if, their bodies were recovered and clearly identified, for what their specific clothes or equipment might have helped the task, VIP's were probably to receive a better funerary toilet, perhaps even in a location devoted to that goal, like their tents.

Then, specific people would certainly have taken care of their bodies and clothed them appropriately.

² De Backer 2020.

The treatment reserved to the bodies of the nobles, high ranking officers or the chosen ones surely followed what they had decided before starting the campaign, as good sense for a soldier would dictate, or according to the decision of the person in command and the contemporary situation.

Wounds

Their wounds would have been bandaged, especially the crushing ones to the head of the stabs in the belly, as a way to prevent anything from falling outside or apart during transportation between the treatment location and the resting place, or the transportation container.

The sixty fallen soldiers of Deir El Bahari display the same kind of basic attention given to slain friends that have stayed a bit too long on the battlefield, displaying the marks of carrion birds on their feet and bellies (Fig. 1-3, 11, 16-23).³ Though their wounds still display some protruding arrow shafts, they were naturally desiccated in the sand, were neatly wrapped in linen bandages and shroud, before being transported and stacked in an unfinished tomb (Figure 28-33).⁴

The carrion birds would have naturally started by the more fleshy and accessible parts of the body, where plenty of food was available for take away and for few efforts. These places would be the eyes, the cheeks, the lips, the inside of the neck for a head and the sole of the feet for the smaller birds (Fig. 16-19; 51-52).

Eagles could feast on limbs, as the thigh and the chin, and fly to their nest with cut heads or packs of bowels to feed their eaglets, while vultures would rip the abdomen open and tear the armpits to reach the inner organs and feast on the buttocks (Fig. 1-3; 8 and 7; 21-23; 50).⁵

Aspect

As most of the campaigns would take place during the hot season, attendants had to work quickly and take some measures when they dealt with the body of a dead VIP. The deceased should not be exposed too long, while water and food offerings had to be ensured quite quickly.⁶

³ Vogel 2003: 244.

⁴ Winlock 1945; Vogel 2003.

⁵ This could be another criterion for the identification of the carrion birds depicted on the Assyrian wall slabs.

⁶ Tsukimoto 2010: 101-109.

The eyes of the body were perhaps bandaged to hide their caving process, especially if the individual had died from a crushing wound on the head or in deep sufferings. The face of some of the mummies of Guanajato, remains of people who died of sickness during an epidemic of cholera, clearly display how this process could have been required for personal dying from horrible wounds.⁷

Bodies, wounds and faces were perhaps also just washed from the life that had born or come inside and started to devour them. One of the best examples of such practice could be the wounds of the archers of Deir El Medineh or the mummy of the Pharaoh Sekenre Taa The Valiant (Fig. 28-33; 45 and 33-44, 46-49, 53-54).

Smell

The lower jaw of the mouth was also surely kept shut by another bandage, to prevent the gas or the stench, from inside the decaying body, to be smelt and any kind of liquid to pour out during the transportation of the corpse.

The natural orifices, as the nostrils, throat and anus, surely had to be stuffed as well for the same reasons, and to reduce the sound of the gas in the bowels.

Movement

The hands of the deceased were also probably tied on the pelvic area to the body, as a way to correct any possible cadaveric spasms or inadequate position for handling the body.⁸

Packing the body

Once after treatment, and possibly a moment of display for the friends, the relatives or the unit, the body was most possibly wrapped in a shroud, or a carpet, with tied strings making sure nothing gets or pours out of the package during the handling, and to protect its content from the rain or sun (Fig. 55).

Such shrouds with the name of the deceased, sometimes with a weapon rolled inside, and perhaps even a sign indicating a specific treatment, origin or function, have been found with the archers of Deir el Medineh (Fig. 56-58).

Fragments of clothes and perhaps also of shrouds have been found in the tombs of the Queens at Nimrud.⁹

⁷ Pichette 2001: 467.

⁸ Zerbo 2020: 271.

⁹ De Backer, forthcoming a.

3. Those Who Were Brought Back

The need to recover the bodies of the VIP's can be assumed from the need for the *kispu* ritual on the fallen, be it the son of a noble, the King or any other character whose peace in the afterlife had to be ensured, if only for political reasons, or because mothers wanted to keep something from their sons who had died abroad. In any cases, and as stated by Seth Richardson, the need for the physical owning and presence of the body does not seem to have been a universal required criteria for these rituals.¹⁰

One should not forget that, even though most of the Warrant Officers must have been coming from the lower layers of the population, the Junior and Senior Officers most probably came from the middle to upper classes of the Assyrian establishment, and thus had wealthy families at home.

The fallen Chosen Ones surely could only afford some kind of varying treatment if their last will, or their relatives', was to be brought back home, and once again only if their followers were able, rich and / or powerful enough to take the time to do so.¹¹

The treatment of the dead body surely also heavily depended on many factors, as the weather, strategic and tactic situations, availability of locations, specialists and equipment, and so on...

If so a VIP had to be brought back home, one can only assume it was to be treated in such a way to prevent the stench, noises and liquids coming from the body to hamper its transportation.

Friendly to Neutral Areas

In friendly to neutral areas, the bodies would surely have followed a kind of preservation process, not to talk about an embalming process.

While Essarhaddon had perhaps an Egyptian surgeon, aware of basic embalming, with him when he died, not everybody had the luxury to be cared for during the military campaigns, but one could safely assume his body was at least brought back on a cart (Fig. 59).

As far as the present author is aware, nothing is known on the treatment devoted to Essarhaddon's body to allow it to reach its tomb in Assyria, so this whole chapter will also be mostly based on assumptions, with the only regret that no Farm of the Dead can help in this matter, so far.¹²

¹⁰ Richardson 2007: 191.

¹¹ Richardson 2007: 203.

¹² Like the famous Body Farm of the University of Tennessee Anthropological Research Facility, in Knoxville, Tennessee (USA).

Wrappings, Salt or Sand and a Basket

If the Neo-Assyrian troops were waging war in the cold seasons and in places like Armenia or Anatolia, it surely would have been possible to bring the corpse back to an appropriate location for treatment, or to the place it was supposed to be sent, in a wicker basket and rolled in linen.

If they died during campaigns taking place in the hot seasons, the bodies of the Chosen Ones could as well be covered with salt or sand.

This first possibility seems feasible and reliable enough with an equipment not so hard to procure or to produce, as it was the fate of the sixty archers of the Deir El Bahari cache.

This solution can be used with a full body, or just pieces of it, but it requires salt or sand in sufficient amounts to be spent on a corpse and do the job.

The body of Nabu-Bel-Shumate was sent in that way by Ummanaldash to Ashurbanipal, along with the head of his shield-bearer, after they committed suicide.¹³ This would have given the appearance of Saltman 1, one of those Persian miners killed when his gallery collapsed, to the body of the usurper (Fig. 61).¹⁴

Sometimes, and maybe as a funerary praise to their warrior skills, the main weapon of the fighters could be rolled with their bodies in their shrouds, as was the case for Slain Archer 11, Slain Archer 13 and Slain Archer 39, or as the sword of the deceased knight in the Middle Ages (Fig. 58).¹⁵

Egyptian Embalming Style

So far, nothing gives any hints that the Assyrian VIP would have used the Egyptian embalming process to bring specific dead back home, but this stays a possibility requiring to stay more than 70 days on the same spot and specific equipment as Herodotus describes it.¹⁶

Scythian Embalming Style

A basic embalming style might have been practiced by some Assyrian butchers or physicians to temporarily preserve the body of the Chosen Ones.

First, they would have trepanated the head to remove the brain, and removed the inner organs from their cavities. Once the organs would have been dried and

¹³ Potts 1999: 285.

¹⁴ Potts 1999: 285; Mutton 2011: 125-130.

¹⁵ Winlock 1945: 22.

¹⁶ Herodotus, IV, LXXI.

filled with stuffing materials, they would sew them in their original location back again. Then, they would have removed the muscles of the arms and legs to replace them with specific herbs or other stuffing materials, as Herodotus describes it.¹⁷

Mos Teutonicus

The excavations led in the tombs of the Queens at Kalhu demonstrated some kind of interest for the preservation of the body, even if it was only in pieces. One can then assume the same process was available to bring the dead King or Prince from a far campaign home, if his body was recovered, or the Nobility to their estates.¹⁸ As was practiced on some Chosen Ones during the Crusades, the VIP's could be brought back home once their body had been prepared in the appropriate way, like the *Mos Teutonicus*.¹⁹

To do this, a technic similar to the later *Mos Teutonicus*, “Habit of the German”, could be employed in separating the bones from the body and getting a clean skeleton in three days.

After the death and the stripping, the body was probably washed and skinned. The skin could be rinsed, dried, perhaps even salted and stored apart in a bag or in a jar.

Once the skin had been removed, the embalmer would have cut open the chest and the abdomen to remove the inner organs. These things would have been emptied, cleaned, rinsed, dried and perhaps also salted before being stored apart in jars, as the Egyptian specialists did.

The excavations in the Tomb II of the Assyrian queens of Kalhu demonstrated that some kind of importance was granted to the protection of the brain, for some parts of such tissues, perhaps belonging to Baniti, the wife of Shalmaneser V, were discovered in a jar (Fig. 62).²⁰ This organ could be removed after the top of the skull was sawed, then cut off and rinsed, dried and salted before being stored apart, perhaps in the same container as the eyes.

Once all the joints of the body had been dislodged and cut off, the body could be dismembered, beheaded and his muscles scratched from the limbs. Such kind of traces appear on the pieces of bones recovered at Ashdod, if these are not the signs of anthropophagy (Fig. 63-66). This could be achieved the first day.²¹

During the night, the fragments of the deceased could be boiled for some hours with specific products, perhaps wine and perfumed liquids. Not all the pieces

¹⁷ Rolle 1989: 28.

¹⁸ Dewar 2017: 25-38.

¹⁹ Westerhof 2008: 78-79.

²⁰ Altaweel 2016: 12, 14.

²¹ Dothan 1971: pl. C: 1; C: 2; C: 5; Haas 1963: 213, C: 6; De Backer 2010: 393-412.

could be put at the same time in the same pot, while this operation surely and also needed quite an amount of workers to take care of the fire, perhaps even a whole night. One can only try not to imagine the smell of that soup.

The following day, the soup was poured in a wider jar whose inside was surely covered by a linen shroud, designed to work as a sieve to collect the solid pieces of the body and put them on a table.

Once organized on the table, the bones would be sorted from the meat and other tissues, while the remaining liquid was perhaps kept in a sealed jar, as in the Egyptian way of mummification, and the other tissues were dried and salted, and put into another jar as well.

After another day, the bones were probably dried, so people would have scratched them with a knife, as it appears on some bones recovered from Ashdod, and then cleaned with dried mud without stones or thin sand as hunters still do nowadays to keep the skull of the beasts they killed.²²

When everything was dried, clean and ready, the bones would be collected, shrouded in some cloth and stored in a small chest, perhaps like a *larnax*, or in a jar, to be brought back home with the luggages.

Dilaceratio Corporis

If the body of the deceased could not be brought back for specific reasons, i.e. battlefield too far from a settlement, body too destroyed to be presented, people could choose to bring only pieces of the body back home, thus they would chop off the body.

As the *Dilaceratio Corporis* was quite a custom during the Middle Ages for the Kings and Queens of France, and then with the VIP's, specific components of the deceased's body could be split and buried at different places.

Without more knowledge on the particular importance given to specific parts of their body by the Assyrians, one could start with the heart as a sample. The best example at hand to assume how the heart could be brought back lies in the testimony of the treatment devoted to the heart of Louis XVIIIth.²³

Once the body had been stripped naked and washed, the chest was cut open, with the two flaps of skin and muscles hanging on each side, and the sternum was sawed to give way to the heart of the deceased. Arteries and ligaments were cut so that the organ could be removed from the chest, opened, emptied, washed and macerated for some hours in a specific mixtures of salty liquids, or just sand, or salt. Once it was dry, the organ could be filled with specific products or salt, enclosed in a sealed box and ready for the next step of its travel.

²² De Backer 2013: 300-302.

²³ Gannal 1841: 223-224.

As stated above, parts of the brain of Baniti have been collected in a jar in Tomb II at Kalhu, thus the brain or other organs could perhaps have been preserved for specific, though so far unknown reasons.

During the Middle Ages, the Kings and VIP's of France liked to have their inner organs buried at specific, different places, while their skeletons rested elsewhere. The Assyrians perhaps did the same with the body of some of their deceased for specific reasons as well.

Mesopotamian Basic Embalming Style

Another way to basically preserve the bodies of the VIP's on their way back home was to drown them into some kind of specific liquid or oils in which kingly bodies were sometimes buried in their tombs, like Tabnit at Sidon, or as published by J. McGinnis.²⁴

The body of Colonel Morlan(d), one of the french heroes of the battle of Austerlitz, was brought back to Paris in quite the same way after his death in combat.²⁵

Enemy Territory

The loss of the body of Sargon II to the enemy in the Tabal during the year 705 B.C. caused a tremendous shock to the Assyrian establishment, and surely because they knew what could be done and would be done without them being able to recover it²⁶.

Surely this changed the importance granted to the dead body of a fellow by the Assyrians, as a means to lessen its impact on the enemy's morale and on the Assyrian armies' fighting spirit.

Pyre

Whenever possible, the Assyrians would probably burn the body of their VIP and bring them back in boxes once the fire was extinguished.

Recent studies have demonstrated that only 1m³ of wood and 3 to 10 hours in the fire are enough to burn a complete human body, while it crumbles, and turns, and boils.²⁷

²⁴ McGinnis 1987: 1-12; De Backer, forthcoming a.

²⁵ Larrey 1817: 233-236.

²⁶ Tadmor / Landsberger / Parpola 2001: 4, 28.

²⁷ Madelon 2010: 21-22.

The muscles of the members fold on themselves by sudden strikes while water boils out of them, the brain boils and provokes the head to open or to burst, then the chest and belly burst open.

Once all the fat has burnt, the skin crackles and tear, the bones twist and crack, leaving only some pieces of what was once a human.

This would have reduced the body of the Chosen One, perhaps measuring 165 cm for 70 kg to a heap of burnt bones weighing approximately 1,5 to 3 kg and fitting in a box like a Late Minoan larnax, roughly 100 cm long, 60 cm wide and 40 cm deep, or even less than that if the bones were crushed, as in Ashdod, and made it easier to travel with.²⁸

A small alabaster vase containing burnt bones, alongside another with portions of desiccated human brain attributed to Baniti, was discovered in Tomb II of the Queens's Tomb under the North-West Palace of Ashurnasirpal II at Kalhu and could be a hint to that practice.

As the discoveries of Ziyaret Tepe from the Neo-Assyrian related period display, cremation was employed when a burial was not possible.²⁹

Excarnation

Although nothing is known so far on this topic, one could contemplate the hypothesis that fallen Assyrian VIP could be temporarily buried, as a mean to excarnate them, when the army marched on its way to the targeted area, and exhumed on the way back home.

The chief of the rebels from Bit-Dakkuri, Shamash-ibni, who had risen after the attack of Sennacherib on Babylon, was captured by the Assyrians and brought to Assyria where he was executed.³⁰ Some tens of years later on, as there was no *kispu* practiced on his burial, and as a way to improve the relationships with Bit Dakkuri, Aššur-etel-Ilani sent his remains and his coffin back to his home place where he was to be buried in a room under the citadel.³¹

This process would have allowed most of the flesh to fall down of the bones and to travel easily with them, one they would have been collected and properly prepared. In specific areas, this process was hugely employed as late as the Korean War.

²⁸ De Backer 2013: 300-302.

²⁹ Hays 2011: 39.

³⁰ Saïd Ahmed 1968: 60, n. 4; Olyan 2011: 217.

³¹ Clay 1915: 60-62, n° 43; Cassin 1990: 355-372.

Assyrian VIP's Bodies Taken by the Enemy

As the fate of the body of Nabu-Bel-Shumate, Teumman and other enemy VIP's display, the Assyrians had means and ways to slow down the decaying process of bodies or embalmed enemy valuable heads to bring them back home.

Hostage and Exhibition

Anyway, the huge interest of the Assyrians in the bodies of dead enemies taken as a hostage for political reasons, or financial ones, as did Achilles with Hector's and its employment as a propagandist exhibition, as was done with the bodies of Che Guevara or Venancio Flores after their assassination, could produce an interesting topic for further studies (Fig. 24).³²

Restitution, Purchase and Exchange

Surely, sometimes negotiations would be prepared for the recovery of specific individuals who died in battle when no specific sides had utterly vanquished the other. Perhaps, as it has been the case for a long time, only the bodies of Chosen Ones would be given back, purchased back, or exchanged, as during the Sumerian period.³³

Pride or Insult

In particular, as a means for revenge against the Assyrian customs towards the dead enemy corpses, but they were alone to have those gruesome habits, particular Assyrian chosen ones could be insulted or dishonoured by being left in the mass graves of their soldiers, as was the case for the body of Colonel Shaw after the failed assault on Fort Wagner. In this type of situation, the shame side of the custom was only a matter of personal view, as his pro-abolitionists parents were very proud that their white son was sleeping amongst his coloured troops.³⁴

Honoured

In specific circumstances, and probably far from the more official, political and propagandist views of the Court, soldiers would perhaps pay some kind of respect

³² Homer, *Iliad*, XXIV.

³³ Guichard 1999: 44-46.

³⁴ McPherson 1991: 755.

to the fallen enemies, as sometimes respect arises between units fighting one against the other for a long time in a peculiar area.

This happened, among others names, to the Rittmeister Manfred Freiherr von Richtoffen, who was buried with all military honours by his enemies of the Australian troops in 1918.³⁵

Given Back

In specific instances, and probably far from the more propagandist and political sphere of the Court, soldiers could probably sometimes give back the bodies of the slain enemies after an engagement, when both sides had been depleted enough no to go on fighting again.

4. Conclusion

This interesting, though grimmy, point is usually not discussed by scholars, and this makes this paper highly speculative, for lack of research and evidence in the sources, either archaeological, visual or textual. Further research on this fascinating topic in the three kinds of evidence previously mentioned should also survey the VIP dead during the campaign in other circumstances, as from sickness, accidents, ageing or exposure.

The keen depictions of the carrion birds and the way they gouge the eyes and pick the behind or the arms of the dead surely demonstrate a close observation, and fear, of their behaviour with the corpses on a battlefield, as this behaviour fits with the kind of wounds observed and identified as such on some of the archers of Deir el Medineh.

The huge impact that the post-traumatic stress disorder must have had on the fighters' morale and the consequences on their later social lives can only be guessed at so far, until new research lead by some kind of palaeo-psychologists, give more clues on that topic.

These lines merely represent some hypothesis and ideas to start the discussion, but they have been based on a deep study of the textual, visual, material and geographical evidence, as well as some good sense and basic military tactics.

These different methods employed by the Assyrians to depict killed enemies, wherever beheaded, dismembered, naked, clothed, killed in combat or executed, find a better understanding and more powerful emotional strength in the light of this paper.

³⁵ Dorflinger 2017: 107.

The study of this topic also allows to study the archaeology of the combat and the palaeopathology of the period concerned, oppose them to the depiction or description in official art and texts and assume the effect sought by the authors.

Another good point is the possibility to recover parts of armours, weapons and other military equipment from the mass graves that can be recovered with a thorough survey of the battlefields, as in Wisby.³⁶

This seems to an excellent follow up to the first attempts at Neo-Assyrian Battlefield Archaeology endeavoured by the author in some previous papers and books.³⁷

The dream of the dreams would be to find the tomb of a fallen Neo-Assyrian general, as the man from Edeli.³⁸

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³⁶ De Backer, forthcoming c.

³⁷ De Backer 2012 and forthcoming b.

³⁸ De Backer 2017: 157-172.

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Figures



Fig. 1: Carrion bird gouging the eye of a slain enemy of Assurnasirpal II
(Wallis-Budge 1914: pl. XIV, 1)



Fig. 2: A carrion bird feast of the buttock of a slain enemy of Assurnasirpal II
(Wallis-Budge 1914: 2)



Fig. 3: Carrion bird flying away with the head of a slain enemy of Assurnasirpal II
(Wallis-Budge 1914: pl. XVI, 2)



Fig. 4: The naked and beheaded body of a slain enemy of Salmanazar III
(King 1915: pl. XVIII, Bd. III, 6)



Fig. 5: Enemies of Salmanazar III are amputated of their feet and hands
(King 1915: pl. LVI, Bd. X, 3)

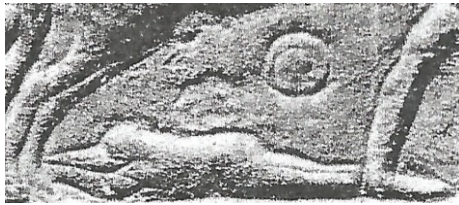


Fig. 6: The beheaded and naked body of a slain enemy of Tiglath-Pileser III (Barnett 1962: 93)



Fig. 7: A carrion bird flies away with the bowels of a slain enemy of Tiglath-Pileser III
(Barnett 1962: 117)

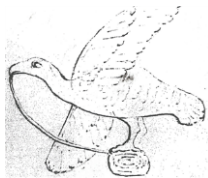


Fig. 8: A carrion bird flies away with the bowels of a slain enemy of Tiglath-Pileser III
(Barnett 1962: 90)

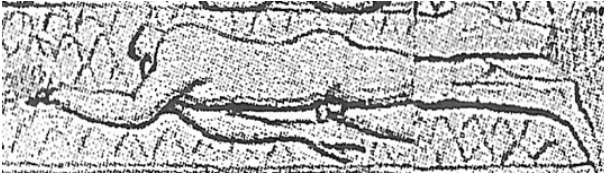


Fig. 9: The beheaded and naked body of a slain enemy of Sargon II (Albenda 1986: pl. 121)



Fig. 10: Dead and beheaded enemies of Sennacherib float on the river (Barnett 1998: pl. 299)

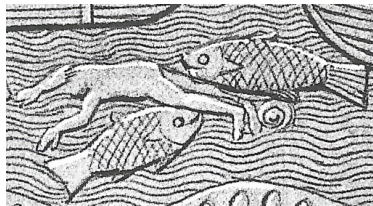


Fig. 11: The beheaded and naked body of a slain enemy of Sennacherib is eaten by the fish of the deep (Barnett 1998: pl. 463)



Fig. 12: Bodies and beheaded bodies of slain enemies of Sennacherib are gathered next to a tent (Barnett 1998: pl. 302)

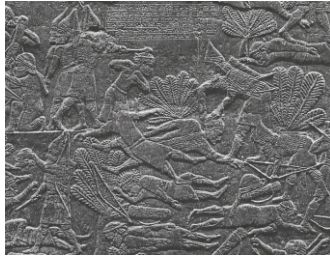


Fig. 13: Teumman, the Elamite King, and his son are slain during a battle against Sennacherib (Barnett 1998: pl. 299)

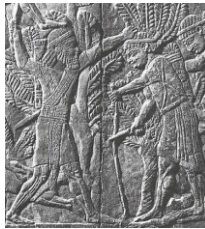


Fig. 14: An Elamite VIP breaks his bow before being executed by an Assyrian soldier of Sennacherib (Barnett 1998: pl. 295)



Fig. 15: The Elamite warrior, Ituni, asks a Neo-Assyrian soldier of Sennacherib to cut his head and become famous (Barnett 1998: pl. 293)



Fig. 16: A carrion bird tears open the flank of a slain enemy of Sennacherib (Barnett 1998: pl. 299)



Fig. 17: A carrion bird gouges the eye of a slain enemy of Sennacherib (Barnett 1998: pl. 299)

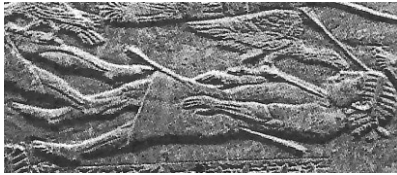


Fig. 18: A carrion bird gouges the nose of a slain enemy of Sennacherib (Barnett 1998: pl. 299)

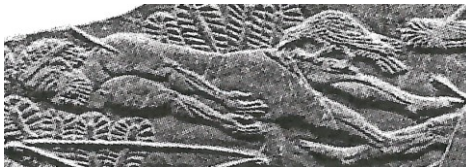


Fig. 19: A carrion bird feasts on the thigh a slain enemy of Sennacherib (Barnett 1998: pl. 299)

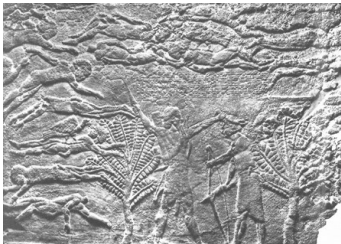


Fig. 20: An Elamite VIP breaks his bow before being executed by an Assyrian soldier of Assurbanipal among naked enemies, beheaded or not (Barnett 1976: pl. XXIV)



Fig. 21: A carrion bird gouges the eye of a slain enemy of Assurbanipal (Barnett 1976: pl. XXIV)

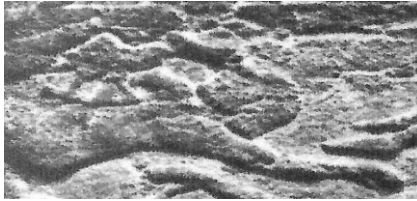


Fig. 22: A carrion bird gouges the eye of a slain enemy of Assurbanipal (Barnett 1976: pl. XXIV)



Fig. 23: A carrion bird gouges the eye of a slain enemy of Assurbanipal (Barnett 1976: pl. XXIV)



Fig. 24: King Priam begs Achilles for the recovery of the naked body of Hector (<https://www.harvardartmuseums.org/art/303416>)



Fig. 25: Wrist guard found on the body of an archer, maybe left in place to identify the function of the deceased warrior (Winlock 1945: pl. IV, B)

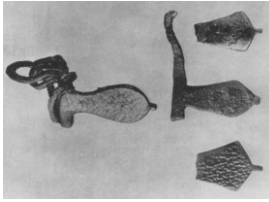


Fig. 26: Other Wrist guards found on the bodies of archers (Winlock 1945: pl. IV, B)



Fig. 27: Companions bury their fallen friend with his armour in a grave marked by a stele (wikiwand.com/en/Thanatos_Painter)



Fig. 28: The shaft of a broken arrow still protrudes from the right arm of Slain Archer n° 6 (Winlock 1945: pl. VII, A)



Fig. 29: The shaft of an arrow still protrudes from the neck of Slain Archer n° 10 (Winlock 1945: pl. VII, B).



Fig. 30: The shaft of an arrow still protrudes from the right lung of Slain Archer n° 36 (Winlock 1945: pl. VII, C)



Fig. 31: The shaft of an arrow still protrudes from the left handside of the chest of Slain Archer n° 20 (Winlock 1945: pl. VII, D)

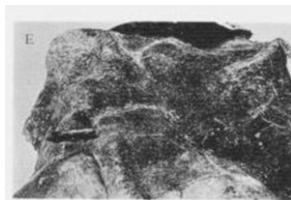


Fig. 32: The shaft of an arrow still protrudes from the left shoulder of Slain Archer n° 30 (Winlock 1945: pl. VII, E)



Fig. 33: The shaft of an arrow still protrudes from the right scapula of Slain Archer n° 30 (Winlock 1945: pl. VII, F)



Fig. 34: Enemies are executed by soldiers of Sennacherib (Barnett 1998: pl. 213)



Fig. 35: Slain Archer n° 10 and his broken right temporal bone (Winlock 1945: pl. VI)



Fig. 36: Slain Archer n° 21 and his broken right temporal bone and arc of the eyebrow (Winlock 1945: pl. VI)



Fig. 37: Slain Archer n° 45 and his broken skull (Winlock 1945: pl. VI)



Fig. 38: Slain Archer n° 58 and his broken face (Winlock 1945: pl. X)



Fig. 39: Slain Archer n° 62 and his broken left parietal bone (Winlock 1945: pl. X, D)



Fig. 40: Slain Archer 29 and his broken right arc of the eyebrow with skin pressed into the orbit (Winlock 1945: pl. X, A)

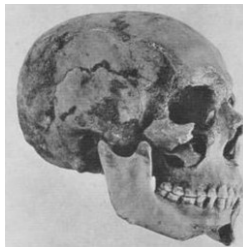


Fig. 41: Slain Archer 29 with the skin removed from his skull, broken right zygomatic bone and lower jaw (Winlock 1945: pl. X, B)



Fig. 42: Slain Archer n° 14 with his broken nose, right temporal bone and arc of the eyebrow (Winlock 1945: pl. VIII, A)



Fig. 43: Slain Archer n° 14 with the skin removed from his skull, his broken nose, right temporal bone and arc of the eyebrow (Winlock 1945: pl. VIII, B)



Fig. 44: Side view of the skull of Slain Archer n° 14 with the skin removed from his skull, his broken nose, right temporal bone and arc of the eyebrow (Winlock 1945: pl. VIII, C)



Fig. 45: Slain Archer n° 21 with the shaft of an arrow still protruding from his left eye socket (Winlock 1945: pl. VIII, D)



Fig. 46: Slain Archer n° 23 with the left part of his face and left temporal bone destroyed (Winlock 1945: pl. IX, A)



Fig. 47: Slain Archer n° 25 with his broken frontal bone, broken left arc of the eyebrow and broken right maxillar bone (Winlock 1945: pl. IX, B)



Fig. 48: Slain Archer n° 52 with his broken left face bone and right parietal bone (Winlock 1945: pl. IX, C)



Fig. 49: Slain Archer n° 54 with his broken left parietal bone (Winlock 1945: pl. IX, D)



Fig. 50: Carrion birds tore open the left armpit of Slain Archer n° 26 to feast on his inner organs (Winlock 1945: pl. XII)



Fig. 51: Carrion birds feasted on the flesh of the right foot of Slain Archer n° 15's right foot (Winlock 1945: pl. XI, A)



Fig. 52: Carrion birds feasted on the sole of the left foot of Slain Archer n° 17 (Winlock 1945: pl. XI, B)



Fig. 53: Sekenree Taa as he might have looked liked before his death in combat (Petrie 1896: 8)



Fig. 54: Sekenree Taa as he looks with the wounds in his head and the missing part of his face probably torn by carrion birds or decayed before mummification (Elliott 1912: pl. II)



Fig. 55: The chapel of rest erected under a velum by the relatives of the fallen warrior (Langdon 2008: 41, fig. 1.6)



Fig. 56: Name of some of the Slain Archers written on their shroud or linen: Amuny (Winlock 1945: pl. XVIII)

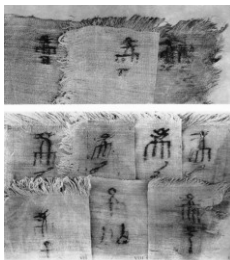


Fig. 57: The strange marks observed by Winlock on some of the shrouds covering the Slain Archers (Winlock 1945: pl. XV)

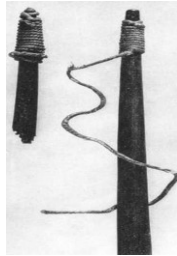


Fig. 58: The bow that was preciously rolled in the shroud of Slain Archer n° 11 (Winlock 1945: pl. V, A)



Fig. 59: Chariot carrying the dead on his death bed in Dark Age Greece (Moore 2007: 10, fig. 2)



Fig. 60: The King and officials pay respect to the stele depicting Salmanasar III (King 1915: pl. I, Bd. I, 1)



Fig. 61: The head of Saltman 1 (<https://www.atlasobscura.com/places/salt-men-iran>)



Fig. 62: Alabaster jar found at Nimrud and containing the remains of a desiccated human brain (Altaweel 2016: 12-14, pl. 82, n° 1989.69b)

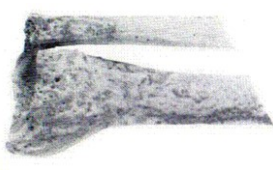


Fig. 63: Fragment of an amputated right wrist found at Ashdod (Dothan 1971: pl. C: 2)



Fig. 64: Fragment of an amputated arm (Haas 1963: pl. C: 6)



Fig. 65: Scratched humerus found at Ashdod (Dothan 1971: pl. C: 5)



Fig. 66: Cut atlas bone of a beheaded victim found at Ashdod (Dothan 1971: pl. C: 1)