

Marduk

I. Introduction. *Mesopotamian god*, →DDD. A discussion of the iconography of anthropomorphic M. (for his more popular symbol see →Spade) requires a closer examination of his elevation from a local god and patron deity of Babylon to the most prominent deity of the Mesopotamian pantheon, and the related changes in his visual manifestation.

The beginnings of the cult of M. are obscure. At least from Old Babylonian times (19th cent.) onward, he and his consort Šarpanitum were worshipped as local deities in his shrine Esagil at Babylon. By the time of Hammurabi (1792–1750) M. had merged with Asalluhi (Asarluhi), attested as the local deity of Kuara, a site near Eridu. Since Asalluhi was regarded as son of →Ea/Enki, M. was now considered his son as well (SOMMERFELD 1982: 13–18). By that time M. also featured characteristics of Tutu, patron god of Borsippa (SOMMERFELD 1982: 36f). With the rise of Babylon under Hammurabi, M. emerged as a prominent god in the Babylonian pantheon (RICHTER 1999). In the Kassite period when the cult of M. gradually spread beyond Northern Babylonia, Asalluhi and Tutu forfeited their independence from M. With the beginning of the second dynasty of Isin and the reign of Nebuchadnezzar I (1124–1103), M. became supreme ruler of all gods and lord of the land (LAMBERT 1984: 3f). He was now increasingly referred to simply as Bel (“Lord”). Concurrently M. was identified with →Enlil/Mullil, the father of gods, and Babylon replaced the latter’s cult city Nippur as the divine focus of power on earth (LAMBERT 1984: 5; GEORGE 1997: 68f; ANNUS 2002: 35–37). Yet it was not until the 1st mill. that the concept of M.’s divine supremacy was systematically implemented; only then was M. introduced to Assyria in this role as one of the “great gods” and gradually absorbed functions and features of other Assyrian gods, but without ever reaching the popularity of his son →Nabu (PORTER 1997).

The assimilation of other gods’ characteristics is reflected among others in *Enuma elish*, which provides a mythological justification for his superior position among the gods. He thus shares some features of →Assur, whose name was substituted for that of M. in the 7th cent. Assyrian version of the myth. M. also absorbed some traits of →Ninurta (GEORGE 1997: 66f, n. 13; ORNAN 2005: 105f). M.’s unique elevation, the syncretism with numerous deities, and the fact that by the 1st mill. almost every god

could be interpreted as a manifestation of M. impede his iconographic identification. The only anthropomorphic depiction of M., which is identified by a cuneiform caption, is found on a lapis lazuli cylinder of Marduk-zakir-shumi I (854–819) from Babylon (1*). The god is shown in a long robe with starlike applications, holding the ring-and-rod in his left hand and a scimitar in his right. He is standing on a snake dragon (→Mushhushshu), a companion animal which was probably adopted from Tishpak, the local deity of Eshnunna, after Hammurabi had conquered the city (WIGGERMANN 1989: 121). However, the ring-and-rod (WIGGERMANN 2007) and the scimitar are not M.’s exclusive attributes. Likewise, the snake dragon is also associated with Ninazu, Ningiszida, Tishpak, Nabu, Assur, and Anu (WIGGERMANN 1993–1997) and can therefore not be considered as a reliable marker for identifying M. While the attributes discussed so far allow only a tentative identification of the deity, there is another symbol typical of M., the triangular-shaped spade.

Because of the vague pictorial evidence early research generally consulted literary sources such as *Enuma elish* when trying to establish M.’s anthropomorphic appearance. Among others, MENANT (1886) and WARD (1910) identified numerous depictions of M. on cylinder seals. Thus a large group of 1st mill. combat scenes have been interpreted as depicting the conflict between M. and →Tiamat (MENANT 1886: 44–48; WARD 1910: 197–212; JASTROW 1912: 106, pl. 52:193–199; contra: FRANKFORT 1939: 199, 216), with M. brandishing a lightning fork and a scimitar or bow and arrow against one or several monsters or animals. However, more recent research reassigned them to other gods or regarded them as general metaphors of supernatural power. Other scenes have been linked to a rendering of what was believed to represent the same event but depicted on the stone blocks flanking the entrance of the Ninurta temple in Kalhu, dating to the reign of Ashurnasirpal II (883–859; MENANT 1886: fig. 22; contra: MOORTGAT–CORRENS 1988), but these representations are now associated with the Ninurta/Anzu mythology (BRAUN–HOLZINGER 1998–2001: 524; ORNAN 2005: 87–88). On the same shaky grounds, the protagonist of the well-known three-figure contest scenes prominent in 8th and 7th cent. Assyria and Babylonia has been interpreted as M. (WARD 1910: figs. 581–583, 602–621). Another group of cylinder seals (WARD 1910: 163–166; PRINZ 1915: 124–126) depicting presentation scenes, mainly of Post-Akkadian and Old Babylonian date

(21st–16th cent.), present similar difficulties: more than one or two attributes assigned to M. can rarely be identified, and these are not always distinctive. Even if a certain consistency in the representation of deities can be observed from Akkadian times (24th–23rd cent.) onward, it must be pointed out that M.'s iconography was not yet standardized at that time. Finally, attempts to link M. with mythological scenes depicted on Akkadian cylinder seals (FRANKFORT 1934: 25, 29, pls. 2c; 4a; 5d; FRANKFORT 1939: 102ff, pl. 18k) have been rejected since there is no written evidence for M. in this period (PORADA 1960: 118; SOMMERFELD 1982: 21; FISCHER 2002: 127f). In the most recent research on anthropomorphic representations of M. RITTIG (1987–1990) compiled all evidence available. It is clear that anthropomorphic M. is represented only a few times without doubt, for example on a Middle Babylonian (13th cent.) *kudurru* relief (2*), an object type which more typically represents him by his symbol, the spade. Anthropomorphic depictions on cylinder seals are ambiguous. RITTIG (1987–1990: 372) pointed out that Old Babylonian identifications must remain speculative, while identification in 1st mill. glyptic sources is hampered by the tendency to avoid anthropomorphic representations in favor of symbols. This impression has been confirmed by further investigation of figurative representations of deities by ORNAN (2005) and HERLES (2006). To sum up, research so far has shown that it is more difficult to identify anthropomorphic depictions of M. than originally assumed, and many proposed identifications need to be reviewed.

II. Typology

General remarks. Due to M.'s heterogeneous character, the assimilation of other deities' features, and the combination of several mythological traditions (LAMBERT 1986), only a few anthropomorphic depictions can be identified more or less without doubt; they all depict M. as standing or resting one foot on a snake dragon (→Mushhushshu). However, the majority of anthropomorphic representations has to be considered as possible rather than certain identifications of M. Since the proposed early examples of the 2nd mill. are separated from the late, i.e., 1st mill., representations by at least 500 years and a distinctive iconography of M. was not yet established in the early 2nd mill., they have to be treated with special caution. Those examples are nevertheless included in this analysis since they have been interpreted as M. on different occasions, or show some of the

distinct attributes, which are typical for the god later on in his iconographic development.

II.1. Phenotypes

A. ANTHROPOMORPHIC 1. HOLDING SCIMITAR AND RING-AND-ROD (1) 2. HOLDING SCIMITAR AND MACE/SCEPTER (2) 3. HOLDING SCIMITAR AND RING (3) 4. HOLDING RING AND MACE (4) 5. POSSIBLE 6. UNCERTAIN 7. UNLIKELY B. SYMBOLIC: SPADE

A. ANTHROPOMORPHIC

1. HOLDING SCIMITAR AND RING-AND-ROD. In ancient Near Eastern art the representation of M. holding a scimitar in one hand behind his back and the ring-and-rod in the other is restricted to one example of Neo-Assyrian time (1*), and possibly one Old Babylonian cylinder seal (see § 5.2). The former, a huge lapis lazuli cylinder found in Babylon (WETZEL et al. 1957: 37f), is probably imitating a cylinder seal since the design is in relief and not in intaglio, and the inscription is cut so as to be read on the cylinder and not on the impression. The long dedicatory inscription by the 9th cent. Babylonian king Marduk-zakirshumi I testifies that the cylinder was used as bodily adornment of the god's image and to be hung around the deity's neck (WATANABE 1994: 243). Here M. is shown wearing a feather headdress; clad in an elaborate robe with →star ornamentation; holding the ring-and-rod in front of his chest and a scimitar behind him pointing downward; and mounted on his acolyte animal, the snake dragon (→Mushhushshu).

2. HOLDING SCIMITAR AND MACE/SCEPTER. A standing male deity portrayed on a *kudurru* of Meli-shipak (1188–1174) is thought to represent M. (2*). The god, facing to the right, is dressed in a full-length garment and wears a feathered mitre. In his right hand he holds a scimitar and in his left he grasps a scepter or mace placed in front of his chest. The head and forelegs of a →Mushhushshu are depicted at the god's side, the rear part covered by the deity's long robe. The attribute animal suggests identification with M. In front of the deity's head the symbol of the spade supports this identification; that of a lightning bolt beneath the spade is not connected to the deity (for a similar depiction but with a wedge instead of a mace/scepter, see COLLON 1986: pl. 28:382 in § 6.2.2).

3. HOLDING SCIMITAR AND RING. On an amuletic bronze plaque (3*) four deities are incised above an inscription. The figure on the left stands on a bird-tailed horned snake dragon and holds a beaded ring in his left hand; the right hand grasps a scimitar. Even if the association with the bird-tailed horned snake dragon remains obscure, a reference to M. on the surviving

curses on the reverse makes the identification very likely. A connection to the bird-tailed →lion dragon, as suggested by POSTGATE (1987: 58), has to remain speculative. However, WIGGERMANN'S (1993–1997: 459) proposal ascribing the two ways of rendering the tail of the snake dragon to the necessity of distinguishing between Nabu and M. in Neo-Assyrian art seems to be a plausible although not very frequently attested variation.

4. HOLDING RING AND MACE. On a unique cylinder seal (4*) in the Louvre Museum, a worshipper is flanked by the symbols of →Nabu and M., the writing →stylus, and the →spade with tassels hanging down from either side. This central scene is framed by two anthropomorphic male figures, each mounted on a snake dragon (→Mushhushshu). The deity overlooking the stylus holds a tablet in his left hand; the other god carries a beaded ring and mace. Both wear an open robe over a knee-length kilt and weapons behind their shoulders. This scene is unique in Neo-Assyrian glyptic. On similar seals a male and a female deity are usually associated with the symbols of Nabu and M. (ORNAN 2005: 100ff), who are interpreted as warrior deities like →Ninurta or →Assur with their consort →Gula, Ninlil, or the goddess →Ishtar (COLLON 2001: 130f; MANGO et al. 2008: 219, no. 64). In case of 4* it is most likely that the anthropomorphic deities do identify the gods Nabu and M. (RITTIG 1987–1990: 374).

5. POSSIBLE

5.1. Holding scimitar and double lion-headed mace. Four seals (KLENGEL–BRANDT 1983: no. 35; COLLON 1986: pl. 31:428–430), probably of late Old Babylonian date (COLLON 1986: 170f), show a presentation scene with a god in flounced robe, facing right, holding the scimitar behind him, and resting his foot on a snake dragon (→Mushhushshu). Instead of the ring-and-rod he holds a double lion-headed mace in his left hand. The latter attribute, usually thought to be the symbol of →Nergal or →Ninurta, appeared in late 3rd and early 2nd mill. iconography associated with a variety of deities (BLACK/GREEN 1992: 169; BRAUN–HOLZINGER 1996: 258, 307ff; WIGGERMANN 1997: 37, n. 43). The presence of a snake dragon on which the deity rests his foot makes COLLON (1986: 29) and others (WIGGERMANN 1997: 36, n. 29) consider it a probable early representation of M. Nevertheless, we have no clear evidence for this identification since the attribute animal might suggest identification with other deities as well, such as a group of

chthonic gods with warlike qualities like Ninazu, Ningishzida, or Tishpak, with whom M. has been linked (WIGGERMANN 1997: 35ff; WIGGERMANN 1998–2001: 330ff; WIGGERMANN 1998–2001a: 370f). However, since the owner of the seal of KLENGEL–BRANDT 1983: no. 35 from the time of Samsu-ditana (1626–1595), a certain Nabium-našir, is known to have been an official in the administration of the M. temple, it is possible that the deity in the main scene may be identified with M. (KLENGEL–BRANDT 1983: 90, 101ff). The fact that all these seals date after the conquests of Hammurabi and thus of the proposed elevation of M. might further support this identification. Two scenes (COLLON 1986: pl. 31:429–430) depict a nude hero with streams of water flowing from a vase. This might be another hint, since as a son of →Ea/Enki M. is more likely to be connected to water than other potential deities. Furthermore, the flowing water could also be interpreted as a sign of abundance, one of the features ascribed to M. during the reign of Hammurabi. However, despite these arguments, a clear identification of M. on these four seals cannot be claimed.

5.2. Holding scimitar and ring-and-rod. On a similar Old Babylonian presentation scene (MOORTGAT 1940: pl. 60:498) the mace is omitted in favor of the ring-and-rod. A nude hero with flowing vase stands behind the intercessor. Following the preceding arguments this could be a depiction of M. as well.

5.3. Holding a scimitar. On two Old Babylonian cylinder seals (PORADA 1948: pl. 56:387–388) of uncertain provenance a standing god is depicted resting one foot on a snake dragon (→Mushhushshu) and holding one hand in front of the chest, while the other is placed on a scimitar behind his back. According to PORADA (1948: 48), the god with the snake dragon may be considered as representing M, but as has been pointed out (SEIDL 1989: 191) regarding his attributes, this proposal must remain an assumption. A seal with a similar presentation scene has been found in the Diyala region at Ishchali (FRANKFORT 1955: pl. 88:933) depicting a deity rendered in much the same way as described above.

5.4. Holding a spade (?). A representation on a now lost Neo-Assyrian orthostat (ORNAN 2005: fig. 120) from the Central Palace in Nimrud may be identified with M. The scene originates from a series of narrative reliefs relating to the Babylonian conquest of Tiglath-pileser III in 731 and the subsequent events, and depicts the removal of anthropomorphic cult images by

Assyrian soldiers. The cult image of a bearded deity is dressed in a long robe and a horned headdress, and holds a →spadelike object in both hands in front of his chest. If this is the *marru* ascribed to M. the identification would be obvious (BARNETT/FALKNER 1962: 17), but since the spadelike object is rendered in an unusual way by broadening toward the upper end this identification cannot be more than an object of consideration.

5.5. Four-faced god with scimitar resting one foot on a ram. The bronze statue of a four-faced god (FRANKFORT 1943: pls. 77–79A; MARZAHN et al. 2008: fig. 104), acquired during excavations in the Diyala region (Ishchali) in the early 20th cent. (FRANKFORT 1943: 21), has recently been addressed as a possible representation of M. (HILL/JACOBSEN/DELOUGAZ 1990: 99ff; ANDRÉ-SALVINI in: MARZAHN et al. 2008: 196, no. 115). In light of the multiplicity of M.'s character and the syncretism with other gods (for example, passages from *Enuma elish*, which describe M. in his role as →storm god; HILL/JACOBSEN/DELOUGAZ 1990: 101ff), it is possible to see in this statue a depiction of M. However, there are other deities that can be considered as well, such as →Amurru (FRANKFORT 1939: 164f; KUPPER 1961: 53), even though his acolyte animal is a caprid and the crook is usually carried pointing upward in front of the deity and not pointing downward behind the back, which is more common for a scimitar. Other possible candidates are →Ea/Enki suggested by the presence of the →ram; the storm god as the four-faced head might represent the four winds; or →Isimud/Usmu, the usually double-faced god (ANDRÉ-SALVINI in: MARZAHN 2008: 196, no. 115). However, any attempt at identification must be offered with caution and is hypothetical.

5.6 Running on a serpent. A popular subject on 1st mill. cylinder seals is the struggle between an armed deity and a horned →serpent. Two groups of seals can be distinguished; the first group (for the second see § 7.1) consists almost entirely of linear style cut serpentine cylinder seals (MOORTGAT 1940: nos. 680–681; TUNCA 1979–1980: no. 77; KEEL 1992: nos. 243–245; COLLON 2001: nos. 286–287; KEEL–LEU/TEISSIER 2004: nos. 153, 179). The god is shown in a running posture on the back of a stretched-out horned serpent, with a head resembling that of a snake dragon, lionlike forelimbs, and no hind limbs, probably a →Bashmu (WIGGERMANN 1992: 166; WIGGERMANN 1997: 50, fig. 1c). He holds a lightning bolt in one hand while the other is

raised behind his head and may hold a second unidentifiable weapon or is empty. One seal (KEEL 1992: no. 245) represents an exception, since the horned serpent has no forelimbs and the running deity is equipped with a dagger rather than a lightning bolt. With his other hand he reaches for a globe prepared by a small male figure, followed by another figure with a ring and tambourine. On two other seals (KEEL 1992: no. 244; KEEL–LEU/TEISSIER 2004: nos. 153) the deity is accompanied by additional figures. On the first seal an attendant holds a spear or scepter; behind him, as on the second seal, another small figure is standing on the rear end of the serpent facing backward toward the serpent's head and possibly closing the beast's jaw. Only this latter seal is of possible Babylonian origin (KEEL 1992: 217; KEEL/UEHLINGER 1996: 42f). Additional symbols like the →star, crescent (→moon), →winged disk, a mouthlike object, or the →spade can be identified on several seals (KEEL 1992: nos. 243, 245; TUNCA 1979–1980: no. 77) as well as two stylized stalks of wheat that are depicted behind the body of the serpent. This might be interpreted as symbolizing good endangered by the powers of chaos represented by the serpent (KEEL 1992: 218).

The identification of the protagonist of this group is not entirely clear. In contrast to most older publications (and some new ones as well) that identify him with M. fighting →Tiamat (KING 1899: 102; JASTROW 1912: 106; LEICK 2003: 11f; TALON 2005: cover; →Tiamat § II.1.1.2), more recent publications suggest the →storm god →Adad fighting a snake dragon (MOORTGAT 1940: 71; HROUDA 1962: 30; TEISSIER 1984: 38; KEEL 1992: 216ff; KEEL/UEHLINGER 1996: 42; →Tiamat § II.1.1.2) or that it should be connected to the →Ninurta mythology (MOORTGAT–CORRENS 1988; COLLON 2001: 148f; ORNAN 2005: 106ff). In light of syncretism and merging of different traditions like the Ninurta–Anzu and M.–Tiamat mythology (LAMBERT 1986; ANNUS 2002: 35ff), the Syro–Levantine tradition of the storm god's victory over the sea (KEEL 1992: 212ff), or the Egyptian →Baal–Seth mythology (KEEL 1992: 209ff), it is possible that an exact identification with one of these gods was neither wished for nor required since all these deities are treated as personifications of M. in the Iron Age. Different mythological traditions could thus be identified in this scene. However, some details of the depiction show close parallels to the description of the battle in *Enuma elish*, where M. is told to hold thunderbolts in front of him (HALLO 1997: IV, 1.39) and

stands on the body of vanquished Tiamat (HALLO 1997: IV:104, IV:129). Moreover, on one seal (MOORTGAT 1940: no. 680) a spade is placed on the back of the serpent between its head and the smiting deity, giving the snake an almost boatlike character that is well known from the *Enuma elish* (HALLO 1997: VII:78) and symbolizes the vanquished monster (ANNUS 2001: xvi).

6. UNCERTAIN

6.1 Standing and resting one foot on a snake dragon

6.1.1. Holding ring-and-rod. A seal impression (AL-GAILANI WERR 1988: pl. 4:8) on a clay envelope from Tell Harmal level II shows an intercession scene with a king, deity, and nude hero (→Lahmu). The god is depicted with a long robe, one leg exposed and resting on a snake dragon (?). In his raised right hand he holds the ring-and-rod; his left hand is placed in front of his chest. An inscription names Ibni-Tishpak as owner of the seal. It therefore seems plausible to identify the depicted god with Tishpak (BRAUN-HOLZINGER 1996: 340) rather than with M., but it is not certain whether a snake dragon or another animal is depicted on the seal. Judging from a photo of the impression, the god is more likely to be holding a staff in his extended hand than grasping the ring-and-rod with his fist (see § 6.2.2). The deity in the presentation scene on a seal of unknown provenance (DELAPORTE 1923: pl. 82:5) and a seal from Assur (MOORTGAT 1940: pl. 50:396) is equipped with the same attributes. In the absence of an inscription it is not possible to link the deity with either god, despite MOORTGAT's (1940: 40, 120) identification with M. The same features occur on a stone vessel from Sippar (AL-JADIR/AL-GAILANI WERR 1994: figs. 1–7). The deity faces a group of people consisting of a worshipper pouring libation into a votive vase with a stylized tree, a priest, and two only partly preserved worshippers. Conclusion by analogy led the excavators to consider it a representation of Tishpak, but M. cannot be excluded completely (WIGGERMANN 2007: 418).

6.1.2. Holding a rod/scepter/stylus/mace. See the discussion of COLLON 1986: pl. 28:382 in § II.1.A.6.2.2.

6.2. Enthroned and resting the feet on a snake dragon

6.2.1. Holding ring-and-rod. Several depictions of an enthroned god with attributes also known from M., namely the ring-and-rod in his raised hand and resting his feet on a snake dragon (→Mushhushu), are known and said to be restricted to Northern Mesopotamia (OTTO 2000: 222).

However, they most likely depict Tishpak, principal god of Eshnunna. Among these depictions is a seal impression on a clay tablet envelope from Tell Harmal level II (OTTO 2000: pl. 35:420), whose execution indicates an origin not in the Diyala region but in Northern Mesopotamia, probably from a workshop of Shamshi-Adad (COLLON 1986: 84f). AL-GAILANI WERR (1988: 9f) identifies the depicted god with Tishpak, whose attribute animal is also the snake dragon, since the seal owner's name is Tishpak-Gamil. BRAUN-HOLZINGER (1996: 340) and OTTO (2000: 151f, 222, 229) support this identification (see also WIGGERMANN 2007: 418) since the ring-and-rod may also be considered a typical attribute for a principal god of a town. On an often-reproduced cylinder seal of unknown origin (OTTO 2000: pl. 35:421), an introduction scene is depicted that mentions Rish-Illum, son of Adu-anniam and servant of Shamshi-Adad, in its inscription. Both BRAUN-HOLZINGER (1996: 340) and OTTO (2000: 103, 222) identify the depicted god with Tishpak (contra: FRANKFORT 1939: 168f). In his most recent publication on the ring-and-rod, WIGGERMANN (WIGGERMANN 2007: 418) offers both possibilities. By analogy it might be possible to identify the god on an unproven seal (DELAPORTE 1910: pl. 12:132) with Tishpak as well.

6.2.2. Holding a rod/scepter/stylus/mace and ring (?). In some cases it is not entirely clear whether the enthroned god depicted on some Old Babylonian cylinder seals is holding a rod, scepter, stylus, or mace. On one of them (PORADA 1948: pl. 56:389) it is possible that the ring is indecipherable as may be the case on a seal from Tell Harmal (AL-GAILANI WERR 1988: pl. 4:8. Thus these scenes could depict the god with the ring-and-rod (see § 6.1.1). PORADA (1948: 48) suggests a possible identification with M. or the sun god (→Solar deities), both of which seem unlikely due to insufficient evidence. The same applies to PORADA 1948: pl. 56:390: the deity is enthroned and rests its feet on a snake dragon, yet the item in its hand cannot be exactly determined. It may be a wedge (writing →stylus), but could well be a rod or mace. Yet another seal (COLLON 1986: pl. 28:382) shows a bearded god in a tiered robe who holds a wedge in his extended right hand and a scimitar in his left, and rests a foot on a snake dragon. COLLON (1986: 155) dates the seal on stylistic grounds to the post-Hammurabi period and suggests an early representation of →Nabu. This is possible but unlikely since there are few potential anthropomorphic representations of Nabu

known from this period (HERLES 2006: 237ff; BRAUN–HOLZINGER 1996: 333f) and all of them happen to avoid representations of a snake dragon and a scimitar in the same scene. Since this unique scene is restricted to few examples it is possible to identify the deity with M., but could as likely be Tish-pak, who is known to carry a mace on some Akkadian cylinder seals (BOEHMER 1965: 100f, nos. 565–572).

6.3. Standing before a serpent brandishing a lightning bolt. A steatite seal from Tell Rimah (PARKER 1975: pl. 16:55) seems to form the missing link between §§ 5.6 and 7.1. The horned serpent is shown with a looped body as in § 7.1 but with two claws in front. The anthropomorphic depiction of a bearded person is seen standing behind the →serpent. He holds a lightning bolt in the right hand and his left is raised behind his head. Yet another person seems to be borrowed from the seals of the first group (see § 5.6; KEEL 1992: no. 244; KEEL–LEU/TEISSIER 2004: no. 153): a figure with a long robe standing in front of the serpent, which seems to be holding its mouth. Even though a reliable identification of these scenes (§§ 5.6, 6.3, 7.1) is almost impossible, at least the first group's (§ 5.6) protagonist seems to suggest a possible identification with M. Due to the level of abstraction, it is more likely that a general metaphor for the victory over the forces of chaos is represented in the other group (§ 7.1; ORNAN 2005: 106f).

6.4. Holding a spade (?) and scimitar (?). A cylinder seal (HUSSEIN/SULEIMAN 2000: fig. 180) found in one of the queens' tombs in the Northwest Palace at Nimrud is enigmatic. Due to the poor quality of illustration, an exact evaluation of the scene and thus identification of the protagonist cannot be given, but as far as the illustration is concerned the seal very likely depicts a god beneath a →winged disk, holding a scimitar in one hand and a spade in the other (unusual according to SEIDL 1989: 121). The spade can easily be interpreted as a scepter or even as ring or rod. An unidentifiable crouching animal can be seen in front of the person. Thus the identification with M. is uncertain, at least as long as a better illustration is unavailable. The possibility that the deity depicts →Ninurta with mace and scimitar can likewise not be ruled out, even if such a depiction would be equally unique.

7. UNLIKELY

7.1. Shooting a serpent with a bow and arrow. This group of seals is made of composition and executed in Neo-Assyrian linear style (MOORTGAT 1940:

nos. 689–695; for additional parallels see REICH/BRANDL 1985: 46; HERBORDT 1992: 86f; KEEL 1992: 218; MARCUS 1996: no. 60; COLLON 2001: nos. 41–43; ORNAN 2005: 106f). The easily produced seals have a wide distribution area and appear from the late 9th to the early 7th cent. The scene is standardized and depicts an archer and a horned →serpent with an erect front part and looped body. Sometimes one or two stylized trees or, parallel to the group in § 5.6, ears of wheat are depicted between the archer and the horned serpent. This motif is often associated with the cosmic battle of the →storm god (KEEL 1992: 218) or →Ninurta (ORNAN 2005: 106) fought against a primeval serpent or other opponents such as →Tiamat (COLLON 2001: 40). Nevertheless, it is unlikely that it depicts M. because the motif seems to be too far removed from any distinct scene in the M. mythology and the figure cannot be positively identified as divine. Still, this mass-produced scene would have allowed large parts of the population to identify their own beliefs, since the *Chaoskampf* mythology, including the battle of M. vs. Tiamat, was increasingly synchronized in the Iron Age.

7.2. Standing and holding a vase with flowing waters. The depictions of a chthonic god on cylinder seals of the second Kassite group (2nd half of 14th–13th cent.) were suggested as identified with M. by PORADA (1981–1982: 49–53, nos. 26–27). The deity is shown rising out of mountains or the groundwater with streams of water coming out of aryballoi or from his shoulders. The composition is heraldic and depicts animals and plants on both sides of the god, as well as an inscription. According to the names mentioned in the inscriptions (BRINKMAN 1981–1982: 74), PORADA suggested identifying the deity with M. since his name either occurs as part of the seal owner's name or is the subject of adoration in a prayer. This idea has been supported by SOMMERFELD's research as cited by PORADA (1981–1982: fn. 151; SOMMERFELD 1982) and by WIGGERMANN (2007: 418) because of a prayer to Asaluhi/M., but is also rejected by different scholars (PORADA 1981–1982: fn. 151). As MATTHEWS points out (1990: 60f), a predominance of M.'s name in the Kassite inscriptions does not necessarily mean that they have a bearing on the design; moreover, these representations seem to depict no specific deity but rather a more general concept of divinity.

B. SYMBOLIC

The most typical representation of M. occurs through his symbol, the →spade.

II.2. Associations

A. **ANTHROPOMORPHIC** 1. ASSOCIATED WITH DEITIES/DEMONS 1.1. Nabu (3–4) 1.2. Female deities (3) 1.3. Possible/uncertain 2. ASSOCIATED WITH ANIMALS 2.1. Snake dragon (1–4) 2.2. Possible/uncertain 3. ASSOCIATED WITH HUMANS 3.1. Worshipper (4) 3.2. Possible/uncertain

A. ANTHROPOMORPHIC

1. ASSOCIATED WITH DEITIES/DEMONS

1.1. Nabu. On two Neo-Assyrian representations (3*–4*) M. on his snake dragon (→Mushhushu) faces a figure standing on a similar hybrid animal who has been identified as his son →Nabu, due to the tablet he is holding in his hand. The rise in Nabu's popularity started in the 9th cent. In Neo-Babylonian times their roles are almost interchangeable, a tendency that continued into Roman times as can be seen from the bas-relief at Palmyra (MESNIL DU BUISSON 1976: pl. 1, fig. 1–5), whose cavalier has convincingly been identified as Nabu by DIRVEN (1997).

1.2. Female deities. On the above-mentioned Neo-Assyrian bronze plaque 3*, M. and Nabu are accompanied by two goddesses, one of which might be →Gula according to POSTGATE (1987: 58). On the other hand, it is equally conceivable that the two deities are the consorts of the male protagonists Šarpanitum and Tashmetum.

1.3. Possible/uncertain. On an Old Babylonian seal (COLLON 1986: pl. 31:428; see § II.1.A.5.1) the →storm god is possibly depicted together with M. in a twofold intercession scene. He is portrayed as a smiting god, brandishing a weapon, holding his symbol the lightning bolt, and resting his foot on his attribute animal, the →bull. Otherwise only Old Babylonian seals with presentation scenes, in which M. cannot clearly be identified (see §§ II.1.A.5.1–3; 6.1.1; 6.2.1–2), feature intervening and presenting deities as well as some unidentifiable suppliant deities. However, M. cannot be identified with certainty on any of them.

2. ASSOCIATED WITH ANIMALS

2.1. Snake dragon. All certain illustrations of M. (1*–4*) show him with his attribute animal, the snake dragon (→Mushhushu), placing one foot or both feet on the animal's back.

2.2. Possible/uncertain. The bronze figurine from Ishchali (see § II.1.A.5.5) puts his foot on a ram. On a group of Neo-Assyrian seals (see §§ II.1.A.5.6; 6.3) M. is possibly depicted in running posture on the back of a horned, dragon-headed serpent with forelimbs, commonly identified as →Bashmu. Uncertain is the identification of the deity on Old Babylonian presentation scenes (see §§ II.1.A.6.2.1 and 6.2.2 with

PORADA 1948: pl. 56:389–390), which show the deity resting both feet on the snake dragon (→Mushhushu).

3. ASSOCIATED WITH HUMANS

3.1. Worshipper. On Neo-Assyrian seal 4* M. is worshipped by an official clad in a long fringed robe.

3.2. Possible/uncertain. Old-Babylonian presentation scenes (see above § II.2.A.1.3) show the →king, sometimes holding an offering animal (OTTO 2000: pl. 35:421; MOORTGAT 1940: pl. 50:396; COLLON 1986: pl. 31:428), accompanied by a priest (MOORTGAT 1940: pl. 50:396; AL-JADIR/AL-GAILANI WERR 1994: fig. 1–7) or a nude hero occasionally holding a flowing vase (MOORTGAT 1940: pl. 60:498; COLLON 1986: 31:430). The Neo-Assyrian seal HUSSEIN/SULEIMAN 2000: fig. 180 (see § II.1.A.6.4) shows the central deity with the heraldic depiction of the king on either side with their right hands raised in worship. An Assyrian official follows on the right side with the same gesture.

III. Sources

III.1. Chronological range. It is difficult to assess Old Babylonian depictions of deities on the basis of attributes that were later assigned to M. The earliest anthropomorphic depictions (for the chronological range of M.'s symbol see →Spade § III.1) that could possibly represent M. belong to the early Old Babylonian period (19th–early 18th cent.; see §§ II.1.A.5.3; 6.1.1; 6.2.1; 6.2.2 with PORADA 1948: pl. 56:389–390). In the late Old Babylonian period (late 18th–17th cent.) mention of M. slowly increases in seal inscriptions, especially in personal names from Southern Mesopotamia (SOMMERFELD 1982: 34, 49, 135). Thus these depictions (see §§ II.1.A. 5.1–2; 6.2.2 with COLLON 1986: pl. 28:382) may possibly more likely show M. (WIGGERMANN 2007: 418). If this is the case, M.'s iconography would be confined to rather extraordinary depictions involving the double lion-headed mace and a nude hero with flowing vase, attributes usually assigned to →Nergal and →Ea.

In the Middle Babylonian/Kassite period (2nd half of 14th–13th cent.; ORNAN 2005: 46ff) the practice of providing cylinder seals with inscriptions that mention the name and filiation of the owner, or prayers and incantations, increases. Yet the attempt to equate the protagonist in the inscription with that of the depiction has to remain speculative (PORADA 1981–82: 50ff). Thus no definite representation of anthropomorphic M. can be found on Middle Babylonian cylinder seals (see § II.1.A.7.2). This seems to underline the tendency of avoiding anthropo-

morphic representations of deities by replacing them with symbols, both in glyptic art and *kudurru* imagery (ORNAN 2005: 130). The first clearly identifiable depiction of M. does not occur until a *kudurru* (2*) of Meli-Shipak (1188–1174).

In the 1st mill. the predilection for symbolic rather than anthropomorphic representations continues (RITTIG 1987–1990: 374), resulting in only a few depictions (3*–4*) which show M. standing on the snake dragon (→Mushhushshu). Other imagery possibly shows M. slaying a horned serpent (see §§ II.1.A.5.3; 6.3; 7.1). Toward the end of the Neo-Assyrian period anthropomorphic representations of M. seem to cease entirely (for the Roman period see § II.2.1.1 and →IDD 2).

III.2. Geographical distribution.

Only a few provenanced objects are known that reliably show anthropomorphic M. They are restricted to Mesopotamia (Babylon: 1*; Nimrud: 3*). Possible or uncertain depictions are likewise mostly without known find place (exceptions are—possible: Nimrud: ORNAN 2005: fig. 120; Ischali: MARZAHN et al. 2008: fig. 104; Assur: MOORTGAT 1940: pl. 80:860–861; Tell Halaf: KEEL 1992: no. 143; uncertain: Nimrud: HUSSEIN/SULEIMAN 2000: fig. 180; Tell Harmal: OTTO 2000: pl. 35:420; AL-GAILANI WERR 1988: pl. 4:8; Sippar: AL-GAILANI WERR 1994: fig. 1–7; Assur: MOORTGAT 1940: pl. 50:396; Tell Rimah: PARKER 1975: pl. 16:55). If we accept some late Old Babylonian examples (COLLON 1986: pl. 31:429–430) as coming from a Sipparian workshop (COLLON 1986: 170f), a center of M. worship may be postulated at this site, coinciding with the written sources from this town mentioning the god M. as well as priests of M. (SOMMERFELD 1982: 22, 29, 44f).

III.3. Object types. Objects that reliably depict anthropomorphic M. comprise a cylinder (1*), cylinder seal (4*), *kudurru* (2*), and bronze plaque in the form of an amulet (3*). Almost all possible and uncertain depictions occur on cylinder seals. Exceptions are a bas-relief (ORNAN 2005: fig. 120) and bronze figurine (MARZAHN et al. 2008: fig. 104).

IV. Conclusion. Only a few reliable depictions of anthropomorphic M. can be proposed, all of late 2nd or early 1st mill. date. The Babylonian type (1*–2*) is equipped with staff (and ring), as well as a throwing stick-shaped scimitar, and stands next to its attribute animal, the snake dragon (→Mushhushshu); the Assyrian type is mounted on his animal and holds a beaded

ring and other insignia of power, such as the mace or scimitar (3*–4*). Other depictions have to be treated with caution (see §§ II.1.A.5–6). In the 1st mill. the henotheistic tendencies of Assyrian religion suggests that a depicted god can be linked with different bequeathed mythological traditions that aimed at interweaving religion and royal ideology in artistic representations to present a concept of one almighty god unifying other gods' characters, and the emperor as "his son sent for the salvation of mankind" (PARPOLA 2000: 204). Thus in the 1st mill. almost every depiction can be interpreted as M. or Bel (see ANNUS 2002: 36ff). MAUL (2008: 172) points out that the merging of these traditions in Neo-Assyrian times made it possible for people with different religious traditions living in different corners of the empire to identify their own familiar beliefs in these depictions. This probably also applies to Neo-Assyrian cylinder seals that show a god battling the forces of chaos represented by a serpent (see §§ II.1.A.5.3; 6.3; 7.1). This development continues with the appropriation of religious symbolism of M. to →Assur, the alteration of the Assyrian version of *Enuma elish* (see § I), and a text from Nineveh referring to a decoration of the doors to the *bit akitu* with a representation of Assur chasing →Tiamat instead of M. (PONGRATZ-LEISTEN 1994: 207f, K 1356). Thus M.'s iconography intermingles with other deities' anthropomorphic representations as much as M. takes over other deities' traits. But eventually his iconographic appearance was not as important as his deeds, whose representation allowed all to understand the concept of Assyrian divine and secular kingship.

V. Catalogue

1* Cylinder, lapis lazuli, 190 x 35 mm, Babylon, 850–820. Berlin, Vorderasiatisches Museum, VAM Bab 646. WEISSBACH 1903: fig. 1; KOLDEWEY 1911: fig. 74; PAULUS 1928: pl. 11:6; WETZLER et al. 1957: pl. 43e–h, 44b; *ORNAN 2005: no. 66 2* Kudurru, limestone, 1188–1174. London, British Museum, BM 90827. KING 1912: pl. 21; SEIDL 1989: no. 25; ORNAN 2005: no. 12; HERLES 2006: no.25; RITTIG 1987–1990: fig. 1 3* Plaque, bronze, 110 x 80 x 10 mm, Nimrud, 700. London, British Museum, BM 118796. CURTIS/READE 1995: no. 209; POSTGATE 1987 4* Cylinder seal, chalcedony, 41 x 18 mm, 800–700. Paris, Louvre Museum, AO 7217. DELAPORTE 1923: pl. 88:11; *ORNAN 2005: no. 129

VI. Selected bibliography

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