

HETTITOLOGIE

STEITLER, C. W. — *The Solar Deities of Bronze Age Anatolia. Studies in the Texts of the Early Hittite Kingdom.* (Studien zu den Boğazköy-Texten, 62). Verlag Otto Harrassowitz, Wiesbaden, 2017. (24,5 cm, XX, 605). ISBN 978-3-447-10798-3. ISSN 0585-5853. € 98,-.

The book under review is a revised edition of Charles Steitler's dissertation dedicated to the solar deities of Anatolia in the period of the Early Hittite kingdom. Chronological limits of the research are clearly outlined in the first pages in which the author states that he will mostly deal with Old and Middle Hittite historical periods and related texts. Empire sources from the fourteenth and thirteenth centuries BCE,

when quoted, are used as a comparison and orientation (p. 6). In addition, several NH copies of older texts are a source for this book inasmuch as Hittites copied and conserved older manuscripts until the LH period. In those cases, it is, of course, more difficult to evaluate the grade of possible interventions or insertions of the late copyists, but Steitler is in this respect always careful and methodologically precise. From a methodological point of view it is also important that Steitler never claims to have the intention of outlining a single solar deity by assembling features of several divine figures. He is aware that even the main solar deity of the Hittite State pantheon, the Sun-goddess of Arinna, would not correspond to this assemblage. The “diachronic and milieu-oriented approaches” (p. 10) are indeed the best solution to put in order the heterogeneity of divine figures of the Hittite pantheon, which are often hidden to us under their ideographic name versions but indeed were as diverse as the Anatolian cultural milieus in the second millennium BCE. The result is a monumental work in which Steitler takes into consideration the features and characters of several solar deities, classifying them both from a geographical and a chronological perspective.

One of the most evident result of this book is that, by the analysis of the solar deities, we clearly see how the Anatolian religious situation is multifaceted in our perception. This book and its focus can be seen as an exemplification of how cults of communities and ethnic groups may sometimes act in an environment of mutual exchange, but also are sometimes isolated, partly absorbed in the melting pot of the Hittite kingdom and partly open to cultural streams coming from the southern regions of the ancient Near East. The centrality above all of the Hattian cultural milieu is, in this frame, crucial in the formation of the Hittite pantheon and so its features persist even in the MH and NH sources beyond the era of the formation of the Hittite Kingdom. Steitler bases his analysis on the right assumption that Hittites had from the Old Hittite period onward three main solar deities: a female, a male, and a Sun-goddess of the Earth with strong chthonic features. Nevertheless, several other local solar deities populated the Anatolian plateau and are also considered in this book. As initial step he isolates the various types of solar deities within their cultural milieus and then describes them through several chapters by analyzing for this purpose many of the available written sources from a diachronic perspective. One statement by Steitler is important to understand his view: “Instead of focusing on the sum of the parts of Hittite religion, our studying will focus on understanding the individual parts before relating them to the whole” (p. 26).

The book is organized in twelve chapters. Chapters 1 and 2 encompass the history of the research in Hittite religious studies and the history of the research about Hittite solar deities. This part is particularly rich because it has always been evident that the solar deities are prominent in the Hittite pantheon, together with the Storm-gods and several other deities, among the thousand gods of Hatti, which would still deserve a separate study. Steitler is aware of the fullness of the previous research on the topic: he always carefully analyzes previous studies and never omits to take his own position on specific features of the solar deities emerging from the sources under discussion. Chapter 3 clearly defines the methodological approach that introduces us to the following chapters as I already mentioned above.

The next four chapters are dedicated to the solar deities in Old Hittite (OH) sources. Chapter 4 discusses the Sun-

goddess in light of the quantity of various religious texts and a few OH historical texts. Chapter 5 takes into consideration the existence of a male solar deity already in the OH period, showing how several cultural layers may have merged during a long span of time that goes back to the Old Assyrian period. Our knowledge of the Anatolian religion in this period is quite limited and would probably deserve a comprehensive study in the future. As shown by Steitler, the word **diéuot-* in the Indo-European languages of Anatolia, Hittite, Luwian, and Palaic, had different outcomes: in Luwian and Palaic it developed into the names of male Sun-gods, respectively *Tiwat* and *Tiyat*. In Hittite the word developed into *šiwatt-* ‘the day’, also deified retaining the original nuances of **diéu-*. In this respect the OH male ^dUTU would be a result of an original symbiosis of the Luwian and Hittite milieu (pp. 192-197). I follow Steitler in his analysis. I wonder if the possible similarity of these two names in two overlapping cultural layers (Hittite (*Š*)*šiwatt-* and Luwian *Tiwat*) and, even more, the same form of their ideographic version (U₄/UTU) may have been one of the reasons for the development of the divine day (^dU₄/^dŠiwat) into the Good Day (^dUD.SIG₅) in later texts. In this case this deity was often associated with its Hattian counterpart *Izzištanu*. When the syllabic writing *šiwat* became outdated, the additional specification SIG₅ was necessary to distinguish the deities and their areas of influence in the Hittite world. It is possible to assume that, while Šiwat was developing as a special and positive aspect of the day, the solar deity *Tiwat*, the Luwian Sun-god, was gaining more importance in the Hittite pantheon, and this change is particularly evident in MH sources (p. 416). Šiwat (and *Izzištanu*), which were of course not included in Steitler’s research aims, would deserve to be object of new studies. It may finally be observed that the form UD.GE₆ (mentioned in n. 779, for example), indeed scarcely attested, could simply be understood as U₄-MI, with the sign MI being the Akkadian phonetic complement and not the ideographic form GE₆. In this case the text IBoT 3.1 would present in the list of deities in rev. 44-46 after Lelwani the sequence *Šiwat* (ideographically written U₄-MI) followed by the Sun deity (ideographically written UTU). The insertion of the phonetic complement in the name of the divine Day would be caused by the need for the scribe to distinguish between the two gods whose name was rendered through the same sign U₄/UTU. This insertion is already attested in the MH sources as for example in KBo 17.74+ IV 5 (GAL ^dU₄-MI¹).

Chapter 6 deals with the Sun-goddess of the Earth in OH sources, which are relatively limited. The possible identification of the original milieu of this deity is difficult and debated. Steitler does not support the proposal of Lorenz-Link that there may be connections between this deity and the Hattian milieu. The ritual KUB 17.28 obv. I 1-54, which preserves Hattic recitations, cannot be considered as an example of the Hattian religion, and for this reason the presence of the Sun-goddess of the Earth among the invoked deities cannot be connected to this cultural milieu. The whole tablet, which contains an assemblage of several magical rituals, underwent a cultural revision operated probably by its scribe Ašḫapala (SA₅-pala), a scribe of the late thirteenth century. In my opinion, however, there are other connections of the Sun-goddess of the Earth with central Anatolia (and thus Hattian) tradition. These connections do not necessarily

¹) For other mentions in texts see now D. Bawanypeck, “Tag. Tageszeiten. B. bei den Hethitern,” *RIA* 13 (2012), p. 405.

mean that this goddess of the Earth and Lelwani would share the same, or even a similar nature²). Much more I would think about a possible Hattian influence on the Sun-goddess of the Earth when one analyzes her role within the late festival texts. This deity emerges in central and northern Anatolia in several local pantheons with strong Hattic features: Zippalanda and Nerik are the main examples³). Of course, the religious texts related to these pantheons are more recent than the ones taken into consideration by Steitler in this chapter, but they are not necessarily later sources to be interpreted as portraying new phenomena.

Another point that would deserve to be studied concerns the paraphrase “Sun-goddess of the Earth” itself, which looks more like an epithet connected with the Earth and thus liable to be applied to several female deities worshipped in central Anatolia, an area in which Hattian and Luwian tradition may have been mixed rather early but also outside the area. It is significant that *tagnaš* ^dUTU becomes the “translation” of the name Allani, ‘The Lady’ of the Underworld in the Hurrian milieu. It is very probable that in this case there is not any syncretistic tendency but merely use of one epithet to replace another epithet. This may explain why in some late pantheons of central Anatolia the local female deity referred to as Queen (such as *Kataḥḥa* of Ankuwa) could be assimilated with a Sun-goddess of the Earth and why, for example, the Storm-god of Nerik was in some texts the son of the Sun-goddess of the Earth (KUB 20.66 obv. III 12)⁴). This would imply that the Anatolian typology of female goddesses, often referred to as “Queen” is characterized by more chthonic than solar features.

The next three chapters (Chapters 8 to 10) are similar in setup to the previous chapters but consider the middle Hittite sources and the aspects of solar deities during the so-called MH period. It is in these sources that the name of the Sun-goddess clearly develops almost constantly into the epithet Sun-goddess of Arinna and that the male Sun deity is definitely assimilated to the Mesopotamian Sun-god, Lord of Justice and King of Heaven, becoming, however, a true product of the Hittite religion. The role of this male deity is particularly relevant in the magical rituals in which he is always invoked as the witness of the human actions, whether positive or negative. The juridical role of the Sun-god emerges also in political treaties in which he occupies mostly the first position. By the way, three solar deities are usually mentioned in treaties, which are among of the most complete source for the Hittite state pantheon from the MH period onward: the Sun-god of the Sky (^dUTU *ŠAMÉ*), the Sun-goddess of Arinna (^dUTU ^{URU}Arinna), and, as a distant third, the Sun-goddess of the Earth (*tagnaš* ^dUTU). They are clearly the three different solar deities recognized and worshipped by the Hittites. It is noteworthy to remark that in the NH pantheon in the prayer of Muwatalli to the assembly of the gods (CTH 381), the Sun-god of Heaven plays the same juridical role. He is mentioned as the first deity in the group of deities of Arinna, immediately followed by the Sun-goddess of Arinna and the Storm-god (of Arinna, II 37 ff.), thus

reproducing the sequence of the gods listed at the beginning of the divine lists of many political treaties⁵).

Chapter 11 is a discussion of the ties between the solar deities and the Hittite kingship with a special focus on the analysis of the Hittite title for the king “My/Our Sun,” and this chapter emphasizes the duality male/female Sun deity in connection with the king and the royal couple. This duality recalls in my opinion the strict association between the Sun-god and the Sun-goddess in the pantheon of Arinna and in the list of deities of the political treaties, just mentioned above, in which both solar deities are at the top.

In the Conclusion (Chapter 12) Steitler not only draws the results of his research, but he also attempts to introduce a further possible research about the solar deities in the Empire period.

Charles Steitler has skillfully written an exhaustive study of the solar deities of Anatolia by examining various aspects of the Hittite religion. Not only did he organize the textual material, but he also prepared new and precise editions of several religious texts. An extensive bibliography and accurate indexes close the volume. We have to thank the author not only for his valuable work, but also for showing us that there is still much research to accomplish in Hittite religious studies. Two other positive reviews to this book appeared in *Orientalia* 88 (2019), 288-289 by G. Beckman and in *BSOAS* 81 (2018) 329-331 by M. Hutter.

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December 2019

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²) As I also discussed several years ago: G. Torri, *Il culto di Lelwani nell'Anatolia ittita*, Rome 1999, pp. 89-94.

³) G. Torri, “Did the Storm-god of Zippalanda have a mother or a wife? Remarks about the cults of *Kataḥḥa* and the Sun-goddess of the Earth in Zippalanda and Ankuwa,” *Asiana* 1, 2019, pp. 222-223.

⁴) P. Taracha, *Two Festivals Celebrated by a Hittite Prince (CTH 647.I and II-III)*. *New Light on Local Cults in North-Central Anatolia in the Second Millennium BC*, StBoT 61, Wiesbaden 2017, p. 136 with n. 28

⁵) See the edition of I. Singer, *Muwatalli's Prayer to the Assembly of Gods Through the Storm-God of Lightning (CTH 381)*, Atlanta 1996, p. 10.