Concept of the Divine in Hittite Culture and the Hebrew Bible: Expression of the Divine

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Abstract

In contemporary research most scholars refrain from pointing out direct cultural relations between the Hittites of Anatolia, who flourished during the second half of the second millennium BCE, and the Israelite kingdoms, which existed in Canaan in the first half of the first millennium BCE. However, both cultures belonged to the milieu of the Ancient Near East, which witnessed intensive communication between Egypt in the south, Anatolia in the north and Mesopotamia in the east; there is therefore a common ground for their religious concepts and practices to be explored.

This paper will present the Hittite concept of the divine, including gods and goddesses and their cult, and will try to draw some possible correlations with the ancient Israelite cult and beliefs. Some specific characteristics of the Hittite divine entities will be pointed out and an attempt will be made to explain through them some Israelite traditions.

Keywords: Hittite divinity, Ancient Near East, Bible, Ancient Israel, Monotheism

1. Introduction

The Hittites, whose great kingdom expanded from central Anatolia into Northern Syria during the second half of the second millennium BCE, were part of the Ancient Near Eastern cultures, absorbing many cultural phenomena from their neighbors. They themselves have had some influence on their neighbors' practices and cult, especially in North Syria.[1] In contemporary research it is not common to point out direct cultural relations between the Hittites of Anatolia and the Israelite kingdoms, which existed in Canaan in the first half of the first millennium BCE. However, both cultures belonged to the Ancient Near Eastern milieu, which witnessed intensive communication between Egypt in the south, Anatolia in the north and Mesopotamia in the east; there is therefore a common ground for their religious concepts and practices that can be explored.[2] The Hittite concept of divinity has some characteristics that may shed light on biblical concepts of the divine in the period prior to the strictly monotheistic perception found in Second Isaiah. In the following I will present some of the

main characteristics of Hittite divinity, and then explore some of the ancient Israelite material, pointing out some potential correspondences between the two.

2. The Hittite Texts

Some of the Hittite texts, which are written mostly on clay tablets excavated at ancient Hittite sites, contain translated compositions or religious rituals and customs borrowed from other ethnic groups in Anatolia and neighboring countries, including Mesopotamia. In the following I will describe mostly the Hittite concept of divinity as it arises from texts of the Hittite New Kingdom period starting with Šuppiluliuma I and his successors (c.1400 until 1200 BCE). Thus, even if these compositions are borrowed or translated ones, they have already undergone Hittite cultural and religious editing.

The divine world, according to Hittite understanding, was somewhat a replica of the human one, although the gods were stronger than human beings and were eternal. They did not die, however new gods also appeared, and thus the previous ones were called "Old Gods." These gods were part of family-related gods, and they fulfilled their duties as a group in an assembly called in Hittite *tuliya-*.[3]

Divine powers could be manifested according to the Hittites in any form and in any place; this is conveyed in the texts by the use of the Sumerian sign read DINGIR, placed before names of divine entities as well as mountains, springs, stones or parts of temples. Deities were not restricted to the stellar or earthly elements, or to meteorological forces, but also to dead souls and demons.[4] They were in heaven, earth and the netherworld.

The word for a god in Hittite is *šiu-*, an old Indo-European form of the Greek "*theos* = God"; it can also appear as *šiuni-/ šiuniyatar*.[5] It seems that the term *šiuniyatar* is more indicative of the image of the god baring its presence.[6] The word can appear in several declinations indicating divinity as an abstract or in a physical form — a statue or a symbol of a deity. The statues of Hittite gods could be made from wood, stone or metal, ornamented with gems, in a human form or theriomorphically, such as in the form of an animal: bull, bird, deer etc.[7] Statues were made in all sizes from small to the size of a human, or they could be represented and symbolized, for example, in a solar disc.[8] The physical form of the god is termed in Hittite: *ešri-/ eššari* when referring to a human-shaped statue, an image[9]; *šena-* refers to a figurine or statuette, mostly used in ritual magic to transfer curse or illness.[10]

The Hittite gods could choose the form and shape in which they appeared as learned from a ritual text: "He will come and celebrate the goddess. In addition if she (the goddess) prefers a pithos vessel, he will make her stand as a pithos vessel. But if not, he will make her stand as a *ḫuwaši*-stone. Or he will 'make' (worship?) her as a statue."[11] The Hittite texts mention a large number of temples named in Hittite *šiunaš per-* (written also ideographically É.DINGIR*LIM*) meaning "house of the god".

The Hittite texts mention a large number of divine names of the gods and goddesses. The Hittite themselves named this large assembly of gods "the thousand gods." The difficulty is not so much with the large number of the divinities, but rather with the fact that they come from several different religious traditions, between which it is sometimes difficult to distinguish. The distinctions are mostly made on linguistic grounds, but sometimes according to their geographical local. In Hittite texts there is a sense of the concept of the gods as one unit, as it appears in the following greeting formula:

> Say to (my) lord (Pallanna), my dear father, and to my lady, my dear mother: Thus speaks Tarḫunmiya, your son: "May everything be well with (my) lord. May **the Thousand Gods** keep both of you alive! May they hold their hands lovingly around you and protect you. May they keep giving you life, health, vigor, longevity, the god's love, the god's kindness, the joy of spirit. And may the gods keep giving you what you ask from them."[12]

The formula identifies the "Thousand Gods" as a unit of divine force by which good or evil can be afflicted upon a person.

3. The National Characteristic of the Hittite Pantheon

In an intriguing article on Hittite comprehension of the divine world, Itamar Singer studied the definition "The Thousand Gods of Ḫatti," and offered a historical glimpse at Hittite national and religious self-consciousness.[13] As can be learned from the texts, the Hittites worshiped any deity that could have been of benefit to them. They have thus seemed to incorporate gods of other countries as well into their pantheon. Singer termed the Hittite pantheon 'an everlasting growing one.'[14] This pantheon is the official national one, and thus has grown with the expansion of the Hittite empire. However, as it becomes clear from the time of king Šuppiluliuma I onwards, this pantheon had strict limits marked by geographical boundaries of the core land of Ḫatti, at the time the texts were composed.

Hittite texts preserved the concept of the pantheon in lists recording names of deities hierarchically. These lists are known to us mostly from international and inter-state treaties and from prayers. The most important prayer recalling a list of deities is the prayer of Muwatalli II to his personal god, the Storm-god of Lightening- *piḫaššašši*, to which I will come back later.

As Singer asserts in his above-mentioned article, during the period of the Old Hittite Kingdom connections were made with Syrian deities, and the ones from Aleppo were integrated into the cult at Ḫattuša, which was originally based on the ancient Ḫattian local pantheon and the Hittite Indo-European one. The later expansion of the pantheon was a result of the incorporation of the southeastern part of Anatolia and North Syria, which brought the Ḫurrian and Luwian deities to Ḫattuša.[15] The Hittites have been said to approach their gods in

a "syncretistic" way; the most often quoted passage in this respect is from a prayer of the queen Puduḫepa of the 13th century, who equates the highest goddess in the Hittite pantheon, the Sun-goddess of the town Arinna, with the Ḫurrian goddess Ḫebat of northern Syria: "O Sun-goddess of (the town of) Arinna, my lady, you are the queen of all the lands! In the land of Ḫatti you have assumed the name Sun-goddess of Arinna, but in respect to the land that you have made the land of the cedars (i.e. Syria), you have assumed the name Ḫebat."[16]

The Hittite royal family worshiped equally the Ḫurrian and the traditional Hittite pantheon through the late phase of the Hittite empire, although Ḫurrian influence stands out in the existing iconography, especially that of the rock carvings at Yazilikaya.[17] The official lists of the gods in the pantheon are comprised of Sun-gods and Storm-gods, protective gods and goddesses and other gods of fate, health etc. Leading them are the Storm-god of Ḫatti and the Sun-goddess of Arinna, the king and queen of the Hittite gods in parallel to the earthly Hittite king and queen.

One of the most important distinctions in regard to the deities would be their locality; the deities were identified through their local affiliation, the town they resided in and where they would have had their temple, in which other deities might also have been worshiped. In this respect the prayer of Muwatalli II has a very important place (CTH 381). Singer, who re-edited this text,[18] has shown that the list was organized according to well-known cult centers, such as Arinna, Katapa, and Zippalanda, all in close proximity to the capital Ḫattuša. For each locality there is the god of the town with its consort, and mountains and rivers are also mentioned: "Storm God of Zipalanda, Mount Daḫa, male gods, female gods, mountains and rivers of Zipalanda (i, 57-58)"; other gods appear as Storm-god of (the city) Neriqqa, Storm-god of (the city) Šarišša, Storm-God of (the city) Ḫurma, etc. As a result the borders of the core land of Ḫatti at the time of Muwatalli II are listed, and in Singer's words:

> For the author of this list of local deities, the Hittite Assembly of Gods comprises the deities of the central districts of the Hittite kingdom — Ḫatti proper (the Halys bend), the Upper Land, Iššuwa, Kizzuwatna, and the Lower Land.[…] The list extends only as far as dose the Hittite presence. […] As for the south and southeast, the significant presence of Ḫurrian, Mesopotamian, and Syrian gods should in no way be interpreted as an extension of the Hittite Assembly of Gods into these distant territories. These gods were adopted into the various Anatolian cults and throughout the centuries became integral members of these cults.[19]

The list, then, represents the direct correlation of "Hittite Gods" with land; the land of Ḫatti is represented through its gods. All these gods were being worshiped in this land, as indicated in the texts, "in the way of Ḫattuša" (h. *Ḫattušaš iwar*).[20]

The Hittites had a special definition for gods who were not Hittite; they were called "gods

of the enemy land."[21] They were requested to support the Hittite king by deserting their land so that the Hittite king could conquer it. However, they would not become part of the Hittite pantheon. The Hittite group of gods — the Assembly — acting as a unit, represented the "Land of Ḫatti." They were the national representation of Ḫatti, against the foreign gods.[22] The foreign gods' statues were usually brought to Ḫattuša and placed in different temples, mostly as spoils of war.[23] If they were worshiped in the "Hittite way," it was only out of respect. They were important in their own land which they governed, and this was the reason they were requested to help in conquering it. In spite of the large number of gods from foreign lands mentioned in ritual texts, they are not well demonstrated as being worshiped. The fact that the Hittites understood the deity as related to a location, explains the need to worship each deity in its own local temple, and that also explains the constant journeying of the Hittite king, queen and princes to different towns in the core land of Ḫatti during festivals, to celebrate the gods in their towns.[24] One may indeed say that the Hittite religion as it appears in the documents from Ḫatti mostly represented the royal religion and thus was indeed highly national in character.

4. The Nature of Relations between the Divine and the Worshipper

As indicated above much of the Hittite documentation comes from royal archives and thus deals with royal and state religion. In the prayers of the royal family the pleading royals are presented as the direct servants of the gods in a relationship of master-servant, which guided the Hittite understanding of the relationship between humans and gods. Muršili II's prayer indicates that understanding in the following words:

> O gods, my lords! Since ages past you have been inclined towards [men] and [not] abandoned mankind. And mankind [became] populous and your divine servants [were] numerous. They always set up for the gods, [my] lords, offering bread and libation.[25]

A king or queen's appeal and prayer to the gods will always use the words "my Lord/ my Lady"/ "your servant." An explanation of this relationship is found in the instructions to the temple personnel of Ḫattuša as follows:

> Is the soul of a human and the gods any different? No! [Th]is is certainly not so! The soul, however, is one and the same. When a slave is present in front of his master, he is washed, and he is dressed in clean (clothes). [...] Is the soul of the gods any different? If at some point the slave angers his master, either they kill him, or they may injure his nose, his eyes, his ears. Or he (=the master) [will sei]ze him, his wife, his children, his brother, his sister, his in-laws, his family, either his male slave or his female slave. They (may) only call him

over, and they (may) do [no]thing to him. But whenever he dies, he will not die alone, his family is together with him (CTH 264, i, 21-33).[26]

These relationships put human beings in a very dependent state of needing to constantly satisfy their masters, the gods and goddesses. And indeed in order to learn whether the gods were satisfied, the Hittites perfected their own oracular system, originally learned from Mesopotamia, through which they inquired about the will of the gods.[27] The system was put to work once there occurred an ailment of a king, a plague or any other natural disasters, or defeat in war. The most important question would have been to discover which god was responsible for the situation, next to try and learn the reason for his or her anger, and then to ask that deity what compensation is required in order to pacify his/her anger. The inquiry could also be on whether the king's stay in Ḫattuša during the winter would be safe,[28] as well as questions regarding the desire of the deity to have certain garments or new servants.[29]

The royal house had to care for the deities, and especially their physical domain on earth, where they had their own houses, furniture, clothing, and other possessions; they had to be cared for through the temples' system and according to the king's instructions. Care of the gods in the hands of the priesthood was the focal interest of all Hittite kings. The constant instructions delivered to the priesthood of specific cult centers directly from the king, is evidence of the importance given to their task.[30]

A god might not have been constantly available, since he might have gone to other countries. To bring the god back, rituals had to be conducted. One text from which we learn of the disappearance of a deity and the terrible consequences is the myth of the Storm-god Telipinu, who became angry and left the world causing all humans, trees and animals to die or suffer. By means of ritual magic the practitioner soothed the rage of the god Telipinu, who returned to take care of his land.[31] It is also evident in invocations to the gods, such as the invocation to the Sun-goddess of Arinna:

[O, Sun-goddess of Arinna! A mighty and honored goddess are] you! Mursili, [the king, your servant,] sent me saying: "Go and say to my [lady, the Sun-goddess] of Arinna: 'I shall invoke the Sun-goddess of [Arinna], my personal [goddess]. [Whether] you [O honored] Sun-goddess of Arinna, are above in heaven [among the gods], or in the sea, or gone to the mountains […] to roam, or if you have gone to an enemy land [for battle], now let the sweet odor, the cedar and the oil summon you." (The goddess is then given offering of cedar and oil odor bread and libation in order to pacify her).[32]

Another facet of the nature of the gods is that the gods are basically part of the universe, even though they have a certain location — land or city — which belongs to them and in which they reside. If the people of their land or city anger them by sinning against them in any way,

the gods will leave their place and support the enemy who is fighting against that city or land. A ritual conducted on behalf of the Hittite king who had laid siege on a rebel city proceeds as follows: a woman practitioner uses cloth of different colors to create seven paths on which food and different symbolic artifacts are placed, and evokes the gods (male and female) thus: "See! Gods of the enemy town […] May those cloths be trails for you. Go away over those (trails)! Turn in favor towards the (Hittite) king, and indeed step away from your land!"[33] After that she makes sacrifices to the gods of the enemy town, and offers them food and beer several times calling on them to eat, and thus become favorable to the Hittite king. The Hittite king appears to be present while the ritual is being performed.[34]

In the Telipinu mythical story the entire world was afflicted, but an individual could also be affected by a single god, especially by what the Hittites regarded as a personal god, called in Hittite: DINGIR^{LUM} $\check{S}A$ SAG.DU-YA – lit. "the god of my head," or just $\check{s}iummi$- "my god."[35] Ḫattušili III thanks his personal goddess $I\check{S}TAR$ for bringing him along the path to becoming the king of Ḫatti:

> [A]t the behest of the goddess I took Puduḫepa, the daughter of Pentipšarri, the priest, for my wife: we joined (in matrimony) [and] the goddess gave [u]s the love of husband (and) w[i]fe. We made ourselves sons (and) daughters. Then the goddess, My Lady, appeared to me in a dream (saying): "Become my servant [with] (your) household!" so the goddess' [serv]ant with my household I became. In the house, which we made ourselves, the goddess was there with us and our house thrived: that was the recognition of Ištar, My Lady. […] I became King of Ḫakpiš while my wife became [Queen of] Ḫakpiš.[36]

The personal god intervened in favor of his worshipper. Thus says Puduḫepa, the great queen of Ḫatti, in her letter to Ramsses II, king of Egypt:

> (It was) my personal deity who did it. And when the Sun-goddess of Arinna (together with) the Storm-god, Ḫebat, and Šauška made me queen, she (the personal goddess) joined me with your brother (Ḫattušili), and I produced sons and daughters, so that the people of Ḫatti often speak of my experience? and capacity for nurture?.[37]

Puduḫepa boasts of her fertility and her position as the result of being blessed by her personal goddess. Similarly we find prayers in which the worshipper appeals to his/her patron, personal god for protection and even requesting that they appeal before other god(s) who is(are) responsible for their suffering:

> The god that has become terribly … angry [with] him, turned [aside his eyes] els[ew]here and does not give Kantuzzili ability to act; [whether that] god [is in heaven] or whether [he

is] in the netherworld, you, O Sun-god, will go to him. Go, speak to that deity of mine [and] convey [to him] Kantuzzili's words (CTH 373 i, 1-5).

Above the personal gods were the "family-related gods" appearing in a text for substitution for the king; a list of gods are invoked thus:

The gods of my body, [the god]s of my person (lit. head), the Fate-goddesses, the grandmother goddesses, the gods of the co[untr]y, the gods of the city, the mountains (and) rivers, the gods of father and mo[ther,] male [god]s, female gods, all the upper gods (KUB 17.14 rev.! 14-17). [38]

And also: "May the gods of the father(s) (i.e., the family gods) protect the younger (and) the elder son" (KUB 45.20 ii 10-11). [39] In this regard it is interesting to note that the family of gods is related to a location as well. In a letter to Muršili II, Mašḫuiluwa, the ruler of the land Mira-Kuwaliya, writes about a servant of his:

Say to his Majesty my Lord: This is what your servant Mašḫuiluwa say: "Pazzu has recently become ill, and his ancestral gods have begun to trouble him. I have sent him (back to Ḫatti) to worship his ancestral gods (*ŠA A-BI-ŠU* DINGIR^MEŠ "the gods of his father"). When he finishes worshiping the deities, may my lord send him back immediately; Let my lord also question him concerning the affairs of the territory." (KUB 18.15) [40]

Since he believed all gods were liable to hurt him, as well as do him good, a Hittite person looked for a way to appease the deity or appeal to it even if he/she were of foreign origin. A divination text mentions that two foreign gods from Aḫḫiyawa and from Lazpa were brought to the Hittite court for consultation over the destiny of an ill Hittite king. The visiting gods received the same ritual as the Hittite gods of Ḫattuša for three days; we can therefore assume that the statues of these gods were brought to Ḫattuša. [41]

One more interesting point regarding the gods is that Hittite kings joined the world of the gods at their death. On earth the Hittite kings and queens were totally human, but when they died they "become a god (*šiuš kiš-*)" [42] and rituals were presented to them. In this way they became minor gods and belonged to the great family of the gods.

To conclude this general description of the gods we could say that they shared many of the characteristics of human beings, having both the form of a body and a mind, they could eat and drink, and enjoy music. They were even eager to gain possessions. [43] They had a will which needed to be understood. The priests' duty was to supply both their physical needs and learn of their will in order to comply with it.

5. "Dividing a god" and the "New god"

Hittite gods, as seen above, could bear the same name or definition such as Storm-god, but be located in different places. The list of Hittite Storm-gods is probably the most obvious and surprising for its large number of names.[44] How could there be so many manifestations of the same deity?

Among the Hittite documents there is a text of Kizzuwatian origin from the southeastern part of Anatolia, which describes how to build a new temple for the Goddess of the Night and how to set up a statue of that deity there (CTH 481). In this text the Goddess of the Night is being built a new temple in which she is expected to reside, but without having to leave her old temple. Richard Beal, in an article from 2002, discussed the Hittite verb used in this text, *šarra-*, which describes the "establishing" of the deity from the old temple in the new one. Scholars ascertained two meanings to the verb *šarra-*: "to cross a boundary/ to transgress an oath" and "to divide/ split off/ apportion."[45] Beal showed that in using this verb in regard to the "establishment" of gods the meaning of "divide" should be applied.[46]

The text, telling of the building of a new temple for an existing deity that already had a temple, describes various activities, including specific rituals to be carried out, while constructing the new temple. In 2004 Jared Miller published a new edition of that text,[47] and subsequently published a separate article on the concept of "dividing" the deity, which reasserts Beal's conclusions.[48]

The activities in this text include sets of rituals, which "activate" the new temple and the "new deity," through a transformation from the "old temple" and "old deity."[49] The text includes a call to the deity at the old temple in the following words: "Honored deity! Preserve your being, but divide your divinity! Come to that new temple, too, and take yourself the honored place! And when you make your way, then take yourself only that place!"[50] however, the rituals themselves do not clearly show a "dividing" act in the sense of splitting the divine entity. The main acts which take place are as follows: after the new temple with the new statue and its paraphernalia are set up, the priests at the old temple "attract" (lit. "pull") the deity to some objects called *uliḫi-* (made of wool) which are tied to the statue of the old deity; they also "pull" her from a pit in the ground of the temple. The goddess is assumed to come to its old temple because of the rituals offering her much food. The priests attract the deity to the *uliḫi-*, which are put in a container and transferred to the new temple. From the new temple the priests go to a river in order to "pull" the deity from various locations; they take the *uliḫi-* to a tent, where they perform a sacrifice. They return to the new temple where they set down the statue in the storehouse and bring the *uliḫi-* and tie them to the new statue. They then wash the walls of the new temple with pure water and oil from the old temple, which purifies them. They make a sacrifice and a ritual pit in front of the deity. Then they smear the new statue, the walls and the implements of the new temple with the blood of the sacrifice. The text ends with the words:

"Then the [ne]w deity and the temple become sacred."[51] I believe this means that they are functioning.

These acts must mean that the deity acknowledges a new place for its worship. The manifestation of the deity reaches the new temple, but the divinity itself is "diffusive" — it could be anywhere in the world while at the same time being worshiped in a certain place. As can be seen in the ritual activities, the cultic implements, including the statue of the deity, do not possess the presence of the deity exclusively, but, being pure and sacred, enable its presence when summoned.[52]

The gods were perceived as having a body; they hear and smell, eat and drink, and have other anthropomorphic characteristics, but at the same time they are ungraspable and travel throughout the universe. What can be understood from this text is that the same deity is manifested in different places. It is not a different god or goddess but rather the same deity. Thus a text of Muršili II recalls the creation of a "new goddess" by his grandfather Tudḫaliya: "When my ancestor, Tudḫaliya, the Great King, split off the Deity of the Night from the temple of the Deity of the Night in Kizzuwatna and worshipped her separately in a temple in Šamuḫa" (KUB 32.133 i 2-4). Hittite "new gods" were created by establishing new temples or cult centers for existing deities — the more temples the better.[53] A mention of a "new god" in an oracle text inquiry ascertains that the cause of a plague was "a new god of kingship"; we can thus assume that it was a manifestation of a god who received a new temple and cult image.[54] On the one hand the deity is one and the same only "split off," but once it assumes its functioning state it is a "new god" and thus a separate "independent" deity, which can bring good or evil.

6. Muwatalli II and the idea of Religious Reform

Muwatalli II, son of Muršili II, is known to have made a religious reform that would have seriously affected the Hittite religion of the 13th century BCE, had his successor not stopped it. At a certain moment in his reign Muwatalli took all the gods of Ḫattuša and moved them to a new capital named Tarḫuntašša, where he venerated as the most important god his patron god, the Storm-god of Lightening (*piḫaššašši*).[55] Singer compared this move to a newly established capital to the move of other rulers in the Ancient Near East: "The Late Bronze Age witnessed an unprecedented wave of new foundations throughout the Near East — Dur-Kurigalzu in Babylon, Akhetaten and Piramesse in Egypt, Dur-Untash in Elam, Tarḫuntašša in Ḫatti, Kar-Tukulti-Ninurta in Aššur."[56] It is quite clear that Muwattalli's change of the head of the pantheon caused a negative reaction in the royal family. Taking the entire cult images from Ḫattuša, the most important cult center and the seat of the Storm-god of Ḫatti, could have been regarded as an insult to the gods. The seat of the Hittite king in the Hittite tradition was determined by the Storm-god of Ḫatti as Ḫattuša.[57] According to Muwatalli's prayer, Singer suggested that experiencing difficulties at court, Muwattalli took up his personal god, a

Luwian deity, which was identified with the generic Storm-god of Heaven, to be the main god of the Hittite pantheon. In Muwatalli's prayer his god "occupies a prominent place in the list, replacing the Storm-god of Ḫatti as the consort of Ḫebat and the Sun-goddess of Arinna." The Storm-god of Lightening thus became for Muwatalli the "one god" as suggested in his prayer to this god:[58]

> Storm-god of Lightning, my lord, I was but a human, whereas my father was a priest to the Sun-goddess of Arinna and to all the gods. My father begat me, but the Storm-god of Lightning took me from my mother and reared me; he made me priest to the Sun-goddess of Arinna and to all the gods; for the Ḫatti land he appointed me to kingship.
>
> ... In the future it will come to pass that my son, my grandson, kings and queens of Ḫatti, princes and lords, will always show reverence towards the Storm-god of Lightning, my lord, and they will say as follows: 'Truly that god is a mighty hero, a rightly guiding god!' The gods of heaven, the mountains and the rivers will praise you.
>
> ... As for me, Muwatalli, your servant, my soul will rejoice inside me, and I will exalt the Storm-god of Lightning. The temples that I will erect for you and the rites that I will perform for you, Storm-god of Lightning, my lord, you shall rejoice in them.

The Storm-god of Lightening, according to this prayer, however, is the most exalted god among the many gods of the pantheon, and being so exalted, many temples would be built for him all over the land of Ḫatti. Both the Storm-god of Ḫatti and the Storm-god of Lightening are Storm-gods, but for their worshippers they were different deities. Like the "new Goddess of the Night," who was retrieved from the previous "old deity," but is still a different divine entity, such as the "*IŠTAR* of Šamuḫa" and the above-mentioned "new god of kingship." They are not the same deities as the older ones. It is as if they were born or created from the previous generations of gods. Muwatalli, for sure, would worship his patron god *piḫaššašši* more devotedly than the other gods.

7. Biblical Israelite Deities and YHWH

The last three decades have witnessed an improvement in our understanding of the Israelite concept of the divine in light of the Ancient Near East religions and especially from North Semitic material, including Ugaritic texts.[59] The Israelite religion was in fact polytheistic in its origin, and flourished as such until the destruction of the first temple. Biblical texts, as well as inscriptions from the regions of Israel and Judah, demonstrate the acknowledgment and the worship of other gods beside YHWH. There have been many publications on this topic, which cannot be summarized here in their entirety. My only aim here is to see in what way the Hittite religion as portrayed above, may shed light on some of the expressions encountered in

the Israelite religion. In the following overview only a few issues are addressed.

7-1. YHWH in Regard to Geographical Definition

An important characteristic of YHWH in the Pentateuch is that this god is the ruler of the land of Canaan, to where he leads his people. He is a territorial god as well as a continuation of an ancient family-god (or gods), identifying himself in Exodus as "Ehyeh-asher-Ehye" and "YHWH the god of your Fathers" (Ex. 3:14-15). His rule over Canaan enables him to decide who will inherit that land (Gen. 15:18). In this capacity he is identified as the one who sets boundaries (Deut. 32:8). It is through war that it becomes clear which god gives which land to which ruler, as in the story of Jephtah in Jud. 11:24 "Do you not hold what Chemosh your god gives you to possess? So we will hold on to everything that YHWH our God has given us to possess." This idea is clearly expressed in the Hittite ritual mentioned above, asking the gods of the enemy city to allow the Hittite king to conquer their land. According to Hittite royal ideology the Srorm-god of Hatti gave the land and all that is on it to the king, as the text IBoT 30.1 declares: "May the Labarna-king be dear to the gods! The land (is) only of the Storm-god, and the Heaven and Earth troops (are) only of the Storm-god. He made the Labarna, the king, an administrator. To him he gave Ḫattuša and all the lands. Let the Labarna govern by hand (i.e. personally) the entire land. Whoever intrudes into the vicinity of the body of the Labarna [king], may the Storm-god destroy him!"[60]

Similar ideology for the relations between YHWH and the biblical king regarding the land is in Ps. 72:8: "Let him rule from sea to sea, from the river to the ends of the earth"; and in Ps. 2:6: "But I have installed My king on Zion, My holy mountain!"; and Ps. 2:8: "Ask it of me, and I will make the nations your domain; your estate, the limits of the earth." The biblical king is in fact designated as YHWH's son (Ps. 2:7).[61]

YHWH, though, described in the biblical text mostly from the Judean Kingdom religious point of view, has become clearly identified with one capital — Zion or Jerusalem.[62] King David transferred the capital to Jerusalem, Zion, and left behind his ancestral cult center in Hebron. He adopted the god YHWH as his patron god.

From the biblical texts we learn that besides Jerusalem there were other cult centers,[63] but it is even more clearly apparent from the inscriptions found in the land of Israel during the last century. The inscriptions show cultic centers with a manifestation of a sub-regional YHWH. The inscriptions from Kuntillet ʻAjrud show the divine manifestation of YHWH of Shomron (Samaria), the northern Israelite capital, as well as the regional YHWH of Teman, representing the southern region of the land of Israel. As Jeremy Hutton concludes: "Far from providing evidence for mere localized reflections of a single, unified Yahweh, the Kuntillet ʻAjrud inscriptions more likely depict the fragmented, fluid divine self of the early 8th cent. BCE, appearing in small scale, geographically constrained manifestations."[64] Hutton suggested that while the regional deity at Kuntillet ʻAjrud was YHWH of Teman, one could have also

worshiped other manifestations of YHWH at the same place.[65] This site, which dates to the first half of the 8th century BCE, was under the rule of the Israelite king, probably Jeroboam II. Thus, being an Israelite site, it is supposed to reveal the Israelite religious concept of the divine world. These inscriptions also reflect the existence of a female divine entity, Asherat(a)/ Ashera, as also found in another inscription from Judah at the site of Khirbet el-Qom. But this subject requires a separate discussion.[66]

Aside from these inscriptions there is another one found at Khirbet Beit Lei which reads according to Nave as follows: "YHWH is God of all the Land. The mountains of Judah belong to the God of Jerusalem."[67] The land that is the possession of YHWH is clearly Judah, and the god is the "God of Jerusalem." This clear definition is to be found in Chr. 32:19: "And they spoke of the **god of Jerusalem** as though he was like the gods of other peoples on the earth, made by human hands."[68]

The evidence for a number of manifestations of YHWH is small but it exists. Benjamin Sommer recently wrote an interesting book presenting the topic he named "Bodies of God," while in essence he is speaking of the "fluidity" characteristic of YHWH.[69] In his introduction he determines that the biblical God had a body and was perceived anthropomorphically in some of the texts of the Hebrew Bible. Sommer then examines the nature of the North-Semitic and Mesopotamian gods and comes to the conclusion that each deity could be perceived as "fluid" and multiple: "A single deity could exist simultaneously in several bodies. Further, a deity could have a fragmented or ill-defined self […] Somehow, it was possible for various local and even heavenly manifestations of a single god to be effectively identical with each other and also distinct from each other" (p. 12, 14). In Chapter Two of his book he deals with the terminology "fluidity" of the deity in Israel where he uses the Kuntillet 'Ajrud inscriptions as evidence (p. 38). Sommer then determines that a "fluid" YHWH exists in the J and E (sources) of the Hebrew Bible texts, but he also concludes that the biblical texts show two conflicting traditions: one that accepted the "fluidity" of the divine (JE), but its account was veiled by the second tradition, that of the Deuteronomic (D) and Priestly (P) texts, which emphasized the stability of the temple with the one deity and its sacredness. This god is permanently dwelling in the temple.[70] Sommer's term "fluidity" can also be applied to the Hittite concept of the divine.

Following Sommer, Hutton suggested[71] that "while both manifestations share the name Yahweh — and thus, in Sommer's locution, 'are… the same deity' — they also seem to have led separate lives in the experience of worshippers. […] Their existence at Kuntillet 'Ajrud was not considered self-contradictory, but rather must be thought of as 'fragmented,' a case of Yahweh's presence 'manifesting [itself] as separate beings in separate places.'"[72] Hutton following Sommer then suggests seeing the "ambiguity of Deuteronomy's pronouncement" in Duet. 6:4 "Yahweh our god is One Yhweh" (his translation). Hutton concludes: "The deliberate use of an atypical syntactic construction in Duet 6:4 — i.e., the enigmatic use of a proper name as a count noun, …may have been designed precisely in order to draw attention to the impropriety, both

syntactic and theological, of differentiating between local manifestations of Yhweh."[73]

In light of the Hittite texts in speaking of the "dividing the deity" in the sense of splitting up its presence into many temples located in different places in the land, and thus gaining a new name ("deity of such and such place"), we may indeed interpret the pronouncement in Deut. 6:4 as an objection to the dividing of YHWH into various local manifestations.[74]

The early Israelites saw YHWH as a divine entity among other gods, and when worshiping other gods in Samaria and Judah during that period, they did so with images and symbols, being part of the West Semitic religious world. The origin of YHWH is not totally clear, but it seems safe to say that King David made YHWH the head of his royal cult. Cult rituals for YHWH were held in Jerusalem, and at the division of the kingdom, Jeroboam brought back a different procedure for the worship of YHWH in order to differ from the royal cult of Jerusalem. He thus facilitated the cult of YHWH of Samaria, although the biblical text still speaks of his renovation of the cult centers of Beit-El and Dan (1Kings 12). Samaria was to become a royal seat only from the time of King Omri, about half a century later (1Kings 16:24).

7-2. The Construction of God's Ark and other Paraphernalia for the Tabernacle

The Hittite text on establishing a new temple for the Goddess of The Night prescribes the building of the structure of the temple and the creation of the statue of the goddess. The text starts with the description of the creation of the deity's image and continues with the other paraphernalia. Detailed instructions on how to make the new temple suggest some similarities with the instructions given to Moses in Ex. 25ff for the construction of the tabernacle. In the Hittite text the first step is making the image of the deity; in the biblical text it is the Ark. Both items are plated with gold and receive additional decorations. Later in both texts appear detailed instructions for material quantities and qualities and how they should be put into use. The biblical text presents the instructions as if they were given for the first time, but it would seem that the text follows an older tradition, one that could have been shared with the Hittite (Kizzuwatnian) one.[75]

In constructing the new Hittite temple there is one person who initiates the building and it is he who always performs the rituals together with the priests. He must be the king (or a ruler who has the means to construct such an expensive temple). He is termed in the text "the ritual patron who sets up the deity separately."[76] It is very tempting to compare him with Moses in Exodus, Solomon in Kings or David in Chronicles. The Hittite text mentions oil for making the new temple sacred, and it ends with the indication that after smearing blood over all the temple implements and deity image, the temple becomes consecrated (h. *šuppeš-*). The biblical text ends the story of the tabernacle in the same way, by smearing oil and blood to make it and the priests sacred (Lev. 8 and Ex. 29).[77]

From Hittite texts and iconography we learn that the Hittite priests were responsible for carrying the divine statues to and from ritual locations. The priests used oxen-pulled wagon,

reminiscent of the moving of the ark in 1Sam. 6:15 & 2Sam. 6. Only priests and priestesses are mentioned as carrying the gods' images by hand, and in one case they can be seen putting them into a box, which is carried on a wagon.[78]

Another point of contact between the Hittite concept of the divine and the Bible appears in the genre of prayers. As mentioned above, a large number of prayers were found among Hittite texts. Among the prayers we find the individual prayer of Kantuzzili who was a prince and probably a priest:[79]

My god, ever since my mother gave birth to me, you, my god, have raised me. Only you my god, are [my name] and my reputation. You [my god] have joined me up with good people. To an influential (lit. strong) place you, my god, directed my doings. My god, you have called me Kantuzzili, the servant of your body and your soul.[80] My god's mercy, which I have known since childhood, I know and [acknowledge] it.[81]

The worshipper is termed by Kantuzzili "the servant of your body and your soul." This terminology points to the fact that he was indeed a priest, since this is the warning given to the priests in the instructions, where they were instructed to care for the gods' mundane presentation and to their *ištanzana-* "soul, will, desire." See the biblical term רצון in Ps. 143:10 "Teach me to do your will (רצון), for you my God as your spirit (רוח) is gracious will lead me on land of uprightness."

8. Conclusion

The more we learn about the cultures of the Ancient Near East, the more we find similarities in their practices and beliefs. Although there may not have been direct contacts between the Hittite empire and the Israelites, both cultures were part of the Ancient Near East, with its extensive interchange of commodities and ideas, as well as literary tradition. The Hittite texts reveal older traditions, in comparison with the Israelite ones; however, searching in the biblical texts we might find the remnants of older traditions, which have undergone adaptations according to the later way of thinking of their editors. I agree with Sommer who pointed out the "fluidity" of god in JE which the Priestly and Deutronomistic editors tried to conceal; I further find that Hittite material may supply additional corroboration to confirm this insight.

Notes

1) For an example see Itamar Singer, "Hittite Cultural Influence in the Kingdom of Amurru," in: Itamar Singer, *The Calm Before the Storm: Selected Writings of Itamar Singer on the Late Bronze Age in Anatolia and the Levant* (Leiden-Boston: Brill, 2012),

253-258.

2) After this article was already in process for printing a new volume on the divine presence in the ANE appeared, however it does not relate its results to the Hebrew Bible. Its description of the Hittite divinity is in similar lines with this paper, though. See Michael B. Hundley, *Gods in Dwellings: Temples and Divine Presence in the Ancient Near East* (Writings from The Ancient World Supplements; Atlanta, SBL, 2013), esp. 285-332 on Hittite culture.

3) See for this term Gary Beckman, "The Hittite Assembly," *JAOS* 102 (1982), 435-442.

4) For a short presentation see Gary Beckman, "Hittite Religion," in: *The Cambridge History of Religions in the Ancient World*, Vol. 1: *From the Bronze Age to the Hellenistic Age* (eds. Michael Renee Salzman and Marvin A. Sweeney, Cambridge University Press, 2013), 86-90.

5) See Chicago Hittite Dictionary (=CHD) Š/3 *šiu-*, 472ff. See also Alwin Kloekhorst, *Etymological Dictionary of the Hittite Inherited Lexicon* (Leiden, Brill, 2007), 763-765. *šiu-* will be represented ideographically besides DINGIR also by the Sumerogram ALAM or Akkaddian *ṣalmu* (Heb. צלם).

6) Billie Jean Collins, "A Statue for the Deity: Cult Images in Anatolia," in: *Cult Image and Divine Representation in the Ancient Near East* (ed. Neal H. Walls, Boston, American Schools of Oriental Research, 2005), 21.

7) Lists of inventories of divine statues and divine attributes describe the forms of visualization of the Hittites gods in what is termed "Hittite inventory texts"; see Joost Hazenbos, *The Organization of the Anatolian Local Cults During the Thirteenth Century B.C.* (Cuneiform Monographs 21; Leiden-Boston, Brill, 2003), esp. the introduction, 1-9.

8) For detailed descriptions and illustrations see Billie Jean Collins, "A Statue for the deity: Cult Images in Hittite Anatolia," 13-19.

9) Jaan Puhvel, *Hittite Etymological Dictionary* Vol. 2 (Berlin-Amsterdam, De Gruyter, 1984), 313-315.

10) CHD Š/3, 369-372.

11) Joost Hazenbos, *ibid.*, 175.

12) Hittite letter from Maṣat-höyük, (HKM 81); see the transliteration and translation in Harry A. Hoffner Jr., *Letters from the Hittite Kingdom* (ed. Gary M. Beckman, Writings from the Ancient World 15; Atlanta, SBL, 2009), 240-241. For this kind of greeting formula in other Hittite texts see Harry A. Hoffner Jr., ibid., 59-61.

13) Itamar Singer, "'The Thousand Gods of Hatti': The Limits of an Expanding Pantheon," *Israel Oriental Studies* 14 (1994), 81-102.

14) Itamar Singer, ibid., 90: "gods from various lands met in the large, almost bottomless melting pot of the Hittite pantheon, where all were incorporated in a single, indissoluble entity."

15) For a description of the Hittite pantheon see Maciej Popko, *Religions of Asia Minor* (Warsaw, Academic Publications, 1995), 91-102, 110-115. For a specific description of the Luwian religion in Anatolia see Manfred Hutter, "Aspects of Luwian Religion,"

in: *The Luwians* (ed. H. Craig Melcher, HOS 68, Leiden-Boston, Brill, 2003), 211-279.

16) KUB 21.27 i, 3-6; see Gary Beckman, "Hittite Religion," 89. It might be that this pronouncement of the queen derives from a need to explain the worship of Ḫebat, since the gods responsible for kingship in Ḫatti were the Storm-god of Ḫatti and the Sun-goddess of Arinna.

17) For the latest study of rock carvings of the Hittite gods' assembly at Yazilikaya, Ḫattuša, see Jörgen Seeher, *Gods Carved in Stone: The Hittite Rock Sanctuary of Yazilikaya* (tr. Giles Shepard, Istanbul, Yayinlari, 2011).

18) Itamar Singer, *Muwatalli's Prayer to the Assembly of Gods through the Storm-God of Lightning (CTH 381)* (ASOR, Atlanta, Scholars Press, 1996).

19) Itamar Singer, *Muwatalli's Prayer*, 176-177.

20) That included also the ritual worship for foreign gods in the land of Ḫatti.

21) Interestingly they do not receive the title "foreign" *h. araḫzena-* "outside." But it is strictly forbidden by Hittite religious and state law to allow foreigners to enter a temple, or come near the gods. Only diplomatic representatives may come to worship — by royal permission — at the temple. See CTH 264 ii, 6-10: "If, however, to someone a foreign official comes, and if he is one (permitted) of going up [into] the temple, (and) usually crosses the threshold of the gods and of the king, let the temple man [bring] him up, let him eat and let him drink. If he is however, [an outsi]der, not of the me[n] of the city Ḫattuša, (and) he steps to the gods, [he shall die! Who]ever brings (him into the temple), it is a capital penalty for him." See Ada Taggar-Cohen, *Hittite Priesthood* (Theth 26; Heidelberg, Winter verlag, 2006), 73-74.

22) Itamar Singer in "The Thousand Gods of Hatti," 83 has taken the Old Hittite text of Annita mentioning the concept of "our God(s)" vs. "their God(s)" namely as a distinction between Hittite gods and gods of other ethnic groups.

23) Daniel Schwemer, "Fremde Götter in Hatti: Die hethitische Religion im Spannungsfeld von Synkretismus und Abgrenzung," in: *Ḫattuša-Boğazköy: das Hethiterreich im Spannungsfeld des Alten Orients 6.* Internationales Colloquium der Deutschen Orient-Gesellschaft, 22.-24. März 2006, Würzburg (ed. Gernot Wilhelm, Wiesbaden, Harrassowitz, 2008), 137-157.

24) Ada Taggar-Cohen, *Hittite Priesthood*, 377-380.

25) Itamar Singer, *Hittite Prayers* (Writings from the Ancient World 11; Atlanta, SBL, 2002), 65.

26) For the text and commentary see Ada Taggar-Cohen, *Hittite Priesthood,* 71ff.

27) For a detailed description of the different methods of oracular inquiries see, Richard Beal, "Hittite Oracles," in: *Magic and Divination in the Ancient World* (eds. Leda Ciraolo and Jonathan Seidel, Ancient Magic and Divination II; Leiden, Brill, 2002), 57-81. See also Richard H. Beal, "Gleaning from Hittite Oracle Questions: On Religion, Society, Psychology and Decision Making," in: *Silva Anatolica, Fs Popko* (ed. Pioter Taracha, Warsaw, Agade, 2002), 11-37.

28) For a translation of the texts see Ricahrd Beal, "Assuring the safety of the king during the winter" in *Context of Scriptures* vol. 1 (eds. William W. Hallo, *et al.*, Leiden-

Boston, Brill, 2003), 207f.

29) Gary Beckman, "Oracles," in: *Context of Scriptures* vol. 1 (eds. William W. Hallo, *et al.*, Leiden-Boston, Brill, 2003), 206f. See more on the description of the relations between the divine world and humans in Billie Jean Collins, "Divine Wrath and Divine Mercy of the Hittite and Hurrian Deities," in: *Göttlicher Zorn und göttliche Barmherzigkeit in den Religionen des Orients und der Antike* (eds. Reinhard G. Kratz and Hermann Spieckermann, Georg-August-Universität Göttingen, 2008), 67-77.

30) For the different instructions texts to the Hittite priesthood and their relevancy to the understanding of the biblical priesthood see Ada Taggar-Cohen, "Covenant Priesthood: Cross-Cultural Legal and Religious Aspects of Biblical and Hittite Priesthood," in: *Priests and Levites in History and Tradition* (eds. Mark Leuchter and Jeremy Hutton, Ancient Israel and Its Literature series; Atlanta, SBL, 2011), 11-24.

31) "Telipinu came back home and concerned himself for his land. The mist released the window. The smoke released the house. The altars were reconciled with the gods. The hearth released the log. In the fold he (Telipinu) released the sheep. In the corral he released the cows. Then the mother tended her child. The sheep tended her lamb. The cow tended her calf. And Telipinu <tended> the king and queen. He concerned him-self for them in regard to life, vigor, and future (existence)." For the translation see Gary Beckman, "The Wrath of Telipinu," in: *Context of Scriptures* vol. 1 (eds. William W. Hallo, *et al.*, Leiden-Boston, Brill, 2003), 151-153f.

32) Itamar Singer, *Hittite Prayers*, 50 (§1).

33) KUB 7.60 ii, 31-32: *nu-uš-ma-aš ke-e* TÚG^(ḪI.A) KASKAL^(MEŠ) *a-ša-an-du nu-kán ke-e-da-aš še-er ar-ḫa i-ya-an-ni-ya-at-ten nu-kán A-NA LUGAL aš-šu-li an-da ne-ya-at-ten šu-me-el-ma A-NA* KUR^(TI) *a-wa-an ar-ḫa nam-ma ti-ya-at-ten*.

34) For a treatment of this text see Ada Taggar-Cohen, "Between *ḥerem*, Ownership, and Ritual-Biblical and Hittite Perspectives," in: *Current Issues in Priestly and Related Literature: The Legacy of Jacob Milgrom and Beyond* (eds. Roy E. Gane and Ada Taggar-Cohen Resources for Biblical Study (RBS) series of SBL Publications). (Forthcoming 2014)

35) See CHD Š/3, 476-477.

36) For translation see Theo van den Hout, "Apology of Ḫattušili III," in: *Context of Scriptures* vol. 1 (eds. William W. Hallo, *et al.*, Leiden-Boston, Brill, 2003), 202 (Column 3:1-13).

37) KUB 21.38 obv. 57ff. See the translation by Harry A. Hoffner Jr., *Letters from the Hittite Kingdom*, 287.

38) See CHD Š/3, 478.

39) See CHD Š/3, 481.

40) Harry A. Hoffner Jr. , *Letters from the Hittite Kingdom,* 321-322.

41) As noted by Singer in "The Thousand Gods of Hatti," 96, such an act is also mentioned in a text from El Amarna, Egypt (EA23), where the Mitanni king Tušrata sends *IŠTAR* of Nineveh to probably cure an ailing Egyptian King. For the Hittite text CTH 570.1 ii, 57'-64' see transliteration and translation in Gary Beckman, Trevor Bryce and Eric

Kline, *The Ahhiyawa Texts* (Writing from the Ancient World 28; Atlanta, Society of Biblical Literature, 2011), 192-193.

42) See CHD Š/3, 494.

43) For a fascinating oracle text showing the inquiry after the anger of the Deity of Arušna regarding the fact that the Queen made herself a gold headband in the Storehouse of the God LAMMA; The God of Arušna asked her for it in her dream, but she refused. She put it down in the chamberlain's house. Instead she had two silver headbands made for the god of Arušna, but the god did not accept them, and became angry. For the description of the oracular procedure see Richard Beal, "Gleaning from Hittite Oracle Questions," 14ff. For a translation of the text KUB 22.70 see Gary Beckman, "Excerpt from an Oracle Report," in: *Context of Scriptures* vol. 1 (eds. William W. Hallo, *et al.*, Leiden-Boston, Brill, 2003), 204-206.

44) See Philo H. J. Houwink ten Cate, "The Hittite Storm God: his Role and his Rule According to Hittite Cuneiform Sources," in: *Natural Phenomena: Their Meaning, Depiction and Description in the ANE* (ed. D.J.W Meijer, Amsterdam, 1992), 83-148.

45) Richard H. Beal, "Dividing A God," in: *Magic and Ritual in The Ancient World* (eds. Paul Mirecki and Marvin Meyer, Leiden-Boston-Köln, Brill, 2002), 197-208. Up until then scholars translated the text according to the context with words such as "transfer" or "remove."

46) See two examples in Beal, ibid, 198: "Then during the reign of my brother (Muwatalli II) I (Ḫattušili III) *šarra*-d goddess Šaušga of Šamuḫa and made her new temples in Urikina"; "The goddess who was determined by oracle to be *šarra*-d, [was determined by oracle] to be carried to Zitḫara. She will be placed in her inner chamber." This was also the meaning given to these passages in the CHD Š/2, 235: "to split off a deity by creating a duplicate cult statue, temple and cult for the deity elsewhere."

47) Jared L. Miller, *Studies in the Origins, Development and Interpretation of the Kizzuwatna Rituals* (StBoT 46; Wiesbaden, Harrassowitz, 2004), 259-439.

48) Jared L. Miller, "Setting Up the Goddess of the Night Separately," in: *Anatolian Interfaces: Hittites, Greeks and Their Neighbours* (eds. B. J. Collins, M. Bachvarova and I. C. Rutherford, Oxford, 2008), 67-72. In this paper Miller mainly tries to understand the "evolution" of the deity, and whether the Goddess of the Night is to be identified with the *IŠTAR* of Šamuḫa.

49) The new deity GIBIL DINGIR; New temple GIBIL É.DINGIR*LIM* // Old deity *karuili* DINGIR*LIM*; Old temple *karuili* É.DINGIR*LIM*.

50) The following is Jared L. Miller's translation, "Setting Up the Goddess of the Night Separately," 67. A slightly different translation by Billie Jean Collins, "Establishing a New Temple for the Goddess of the Night," in: *Context of Scriptures* vol. 1 (eds. William W. Hallo, *et al.*, Leiden-Boston, Brill, 2003), 177: "You, honored goddess, protect your person/body, divide your divinity, come to these new temples, take an honored place."

51) In Hittite: *nu* DINGIR GIBIL É.DINGIR-*LIM*-*ia* š*u-up-pe-eš-zi* (KUB 29.4 iv, 40).

52) As far as I know there is no ritual in the Hittite texts that is exactly parallel to the

Mesopotamian *mīs-pî* ritual of washing the mouth of the deity statue making the deity enter it. For a recent attempt to correlate a Kizzuwatna Hittite-Hurrian *itkalzi-*ritual to the Mesopotamian ritual see Rita Strauss, *Reinigungsrituale aus Kizzuwatna: Ein Beitra zur Erforschung hethitischer Ritualtradition und Kulturgeschichte* (Berlin-New York, De Gruyter, 2006), 216-283. For this ritual of *mīs-pî* see Christopher Walker and Michael Dick, *The Induction of the Cult Image in Ancient Mesopotamia: the Mesopotamian Mīs Pî Ritual: transliteration, translation, and commentary* (Neo-Assyrian Text Corpus Project, 2001).

53) In a cult inventory text an inventory of the Storm-god of the town Ariuwa is given as 2 *ḫuwaši-*stones which are identified as "2 old gods" and one statue, one mace and one solar disk identified as "3 new gods." KUB 38.23 obv. 7-9, 10, 11 CHD Š/3, 496.

54) KUB 5.3 ii, 1-2; 5-6 see CHD Š/3, 476.

55) We know of that act only from a short mention made by Ḫattušili III in his text called "Apology," for which see Theo van den Hout, ibid, 200: "Now, when my brother Muwatalli at the behest of his own deity went down to the Lower Land, he left (the city of) Ḫattuša behind. He took up [the gods] of Ḫatti and the Manes (=deceased kings) and [c]arried them to the land of [Tarḫuntašša]."

56) Itamar Singer, "The failed reforms of Akhenaten and Muwatalli", *BMSAES* 6 (2006), 37-58, http://www.thebritishmuseum.ac.uk/bmsaes/issue6/singer.html. The quotation is from p. 37.

57) IBoT 1.30. See CHD Š/1, 102.

58) Itamar Singer's translation, *Muwatalli's Prayer*, 40.

59) For a comprehensive work on this topic with reference to previous studies see Mark S. Smith, *The Origin of Biblical Monotheism: Israel's Polytheistic Background and the Ugaritic Texts* (Oxford University Press, 2001). See also idem, *Early History of God: Yahweh and Other Deities in Ancient Israel* (Biblical Resource Series; Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company; 2nd Edition, 2002).

60) For the translation see CHD Š/1, 102; and compare Hans G. Güterbock, "Authority and Law in the Hittite Kingdom," *JAOS Supp.* 17 (1954), 16. For the transliteration of the Hittite text see Ada Taggar-Cohen, *Hittite Priesthood*, 235.

61) See Norman C. Habel, *The Land Is Mine: Six Biblical Ideologies* (Minneapolis, Fortress Press, 1995), 17-32.

62) For a short introduction to the issue of the diversity in the two kingdoms' religious beliefs and conduct, see Francesca Stavrakopulou and John Barton, "Introduction: Religious Diversity in Ancient Israel and Judah," in: *Religious Diversity in Ancient Israel and Judah* (eds. Francesca Stavrakopulou and John Barton, London, T&T Clark International, 2010), 1-8.

63) See Diana Edelman, "Cultic Sites and Complexes Beyond the Jerusalem Temple," in: *Religious Diversity in Ancient Israel and Judah* (eds. Francesca Stavrakopulou and John Barton, London, T&T Clark International, 2010), 82-103.

64) Jeremy M. Hutton, "Local Manifestations of YHWH and Worship in the Interstices: A Note on Kuntillet 'Ajrud," *JANER* 10.2 (2010), 205.

65) Jeremy M. Hutton, ibid, 202-204.

66) On whether Asherah is in these inscriptions a generic term for a female consort to YHWH or the private name of the deity Asherata, see the note of Nadav Na'aman, "The Inscriptions of Kuntillet 'Ajrud Through the Lens of Historical Research," *Ugarit Forshungen* 43 (2011), 299-324. For the latest publication of these inscriptions and their locations see Ze'ev Meshel, *Kuntillet 'Ajrud (Horvat Teman): An Iron Age II Religious Site on the Judah-Sinai Border* (Jerusalem, Israel Exploration Society, 2012).

67) This inscription, dated to the 6ᵗʰ century and found in a cave, reads (Khirbet Beit Lei 5): יהוה אלהי כל הארץ הרי יהד לו לאלהי ירשלם. This reading is not accepted by all; see for reference F.W. Dobbs-Allsopp *et al.*, *Hebrew Inscriptions: Texts from the Biblical Period of the Monarchy with Concordance* (New Haven-London, Yale University Press, 2005), 128.

68) In Hebrew: וידברו אל אלהי ירושלם כעל אלהי עמי הארץ מעשה ידי האדם. We also find the designation of YHWH as the god of Zion in Ps. 147:12 (see other definitions of YHWH in relation to the city: Is. 4:5, 18:7, 24:23; Joel 4:16-17 and more). As Spencer Allen says the "*b*-locative (YHWH in Zion) does not function like a full name," and therefore we should avoid taking the name YHWH found in a certain city as a name for a separate deity; see Spencer L. Allen, "An Examination of Northwest Semitic Names and the Beth-Locative," *JESOT* 2,1 (2013), 61-82; quotation from p. 71.

69) Benjamin D. Sommer, *The Bodies of God and the World of Ancient Israel* (The JTS, Cambridge University Press, 2009); I used the Kindle electronic version of the book.

70) More on his explanation of the sacredness concept and its relation to the characteristic of YHWH see his chapters 4-5.

71) Jeremy M. Hutton, ibid, 205-206.

72) Quotes are from Benjamin D. Sommer, ibid, 13, 15.

73) Jeremy M. Hutton, ibid, 260.

74) In contrast to Is. 43:10: "Before me no god was created, And after me none shall exist."

75) The biblical ark of God will then hold in it the tablets of law so that the God of Israel "will reside among Israel and will be their God" (Ex. 29:45); YHWH's presence is seen in a cloud over the Tabernacle (Ex. 40:34), and later in Solomon's temple (1Kings 8:10-11).

76) *nu-za* DINGIR^*LAM* *ku-iš ha-an-ti-i a-ša-ši nu-za a-pa-a-aš* EN.SISKUR ^LÚSANGA MUNUS^MEŠ *kat-re-eš-ša pa-ra-a* UD-*an wa-ar-ap-pa-an-zi* "The ritual patron, who sets up the deity separately, the SANGA-priest and the Katri-women wash themselves on the following day." See Jared Miller, *Studies in the Origins, Development and Interpretation of the Kizzuwatna Rituals,* 277-278 (§8 A i, 52-54).

77) These biblical stories include different traditions, and are mentioned here in short. For a treatment of the Hittite text of the Goddess of the Night in relation to biblical use of blood in the consecration of the biblical priesthood, see Yitzhaq Feder, *Blood Expiation in Hittite and Biblical Rituals: Origins, Context, and Meaning* (Writings from the Ancient World SS 2; Atlanta, SBL, 2011), 26-33. For another interpretation

of the blood see Billie Jean Collins, "A Statue for the Deity," 29-32.

78) KBo 24.107 "They place/ install(?) the divine image in the basket"; and KUB 53.14 iii, 15-16 "They set the divine image back up in the carriage. His priest takes his place beside it; he holds the divine image in place." Probably so that it will not fall from the carriage. In the biblical text when Uzza — who was not a priest — touched the ark of God he dropped dead (2Sam. 6:7); only the priests are allowed to handle the divine tools. See CHD Š/3, 496. Victor Avigdor Hurowitz, "The Return of the Ark and Implemented Ox Omens," in: *All the Wisdom of the East: Studies in Near Eastern Archaeology and History in Honor of Eliezer D. Oren* (eds. Mayer Gruber *et al.*, OBO, Fribourg-Göttingen, Vandenhoeck&Ruprecht, 2012), 177-185, suggested that the religious activities done by the Philistines in 1Sam. 6 can be explained through Israelite religious practice. However, it can very likely be explained through Hittite oracular divination for pacifying an angry deity.

79) More on Kantuzili and his prayers see Itamar Singer, "Sin and Punishment in Hittite Prayers," in: *An Experienced Scribe Who Neglects Nothing: Ancient Near Eastern Studies in Honor of Jacob Klein* (eds. Yitschak Sefati *et al.*, Bethesda, CDL Press, 2005), 557-567.

80) [*nu-mu-za*] *ammel* DINGIR-*YA* ᴵ*Kantuzilin tuggaš-taš ištanzanaš-taš* IR-*KA ḫalzait* (KBo 21.22 obv. 14-15).

81) Itamar Singer, *Hittite Prayers*, 31 (§2').