

FUNERAL IN HITTITE AND PARALLELS WITH SOUTH CAUCASUS

დაკრძალვა ხეთებში და პარალელები სამხრეთ კავკასიასთან

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Abstract: Dieser Artikel befasst sich mit einer Reihe von Fragen im Zusammenhang mit Bestattungen in hethitischen und südkaukasischen Kulturen. Bis zum heutigen Tag sind zahlreiche Hethitische Texte zum Thema Bestattung überliefert. Am besten ist das hethitische Bestattungsritual šalliš waštaiš erhalten. Es erstreckte sich über 13 oder 14 Tage und beinhaltete jeden Tag verschiedene Zeremonien. In diesem Zusammenhang sind auch Bräuche, Traditionen und die archäologischen und ethnografischen Materialien im Südkaukasus interessant. Die hethitischen Bestattungsbräuche und die damit verbundenen Traditionen haben viele Gemeinsamkeiten mit den Bestattungsbräuchen und -ritualen des Südkaukasus. In diesem Artikel konzentrieren wir uns auf eine Reihe von Ähnlichkeiten, aus denen wir erschließen können, dass die hethitischen Bestattungsrituale, Darstellungen und Bräuche unter dem Einfluss der Traditionen und Überzeugungen der mit dem Südkaukasus verbundenen Hattischen, (indigene Bevölkerung) entstanden sein müssen.

Keywords: Assyriology; Hittite; Funerary; Funeral ritual; Hattians; South Caucasus.

ნინო ჩარეკიშვილი

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აბსტრაქტი: სტატია შეეხება ხეთურ და სამხრეთ კავკასიის კულტურებში დაკრძალვასთან დაკავშირებულ არაერთ საკითხს. ჩვენამდე მოაღწია დაკრძალვასთან დაკავშირებულმა ხეთურმა ტექსტებმა. ყველაზე კარგად არის შემორჩენილი დაკრძალვის ხეთური რიტუალი šalliš waštaiš. ის 13 ან 14 დღე გრძელდებოდა და ყოველდღე სხვადასხვა ცერემონიებს მოიცავდა. ამ მხრივ ასევე საინტერესოა სამხრეთ კავკასიაში არსებული წეს-ჩვეულებები, ტრადიციები, არქეოლოგიური და ეთნოგრაფიული მასალა. ხეთურ დაკრძალვის წესსა და მასთან დაკავშირებულ ტრადიციებს ბევრი საერთო აქვს სამხრეთ კავკასიის დაკრძალვის წესსა და რიტუალებთან. ჩვენ ამ სტატიაში ყურადღებას ვამახვილებთ არაერთ მსგავსებაზე, რომლის საფუძველზეც შეიძლება დავასკვნათ, რომ ხეთური დაკრძალვის რიტუალები, წარმოდგენები და წეს-ჩვეულებები სამხრეთ კავკასიასთან დაკავშირებული

ხათური მკვიდრი მოსახლეობის ტრადიციების და რწმენა-წარმოდგენების გავლენით უნდა იყოს შექმნილი.

საძიებო სიტყვები: ასირიოლოგია; ხეთები; დაკრძალვა; დაკრძალვის რიტუალი; ხათები; სამხრეთ კავკასია.

Introduction: The Hittite funeral custom and ritual related to it have reached us. In this regard, the burial customs and traditions of the South Caucasus, rich ethnographic material and archeologically discovered artifacts, which allow us to compare, are also interesting.

Methods: The research is mainly based on research methods proven in historical and political sciences: description, empirical analysis, comparative-historical method, causal-comparative analysis, methods of critical and systematic analysis.

Results: Based on the comparison of the funeral rules, traditions, and materials found in Hittite and South Caucasus, the following conclusion is made: Hittite burial rites must have been created under the influence of the traditions and beliefs of the Hattian indigenous population, which was related to the South Caucasus.

Discussion: The Hittite funeral ritual lasted 13 or 14 days and included different ceremonies each day. The royal funeral ritual is known today as the *šalliš waštaiš* ritual. The expression *šalliš waštaiš* means "great sin/disaster", a euphemism for the death of the king or queen, used in the very first lines: "*When a great disaster happens in Hattusa, either the king or the queen becomes a god.*"¹ Two main parts can be distinguished in the text: the first part is about the cremation of the body; and second - about different type of micro-rituals, focused on the statue of the deceased one. The place of execution the ritual must have been, usually, near the Hittite capital, but the exact location is not mentioned, although the text mentions the cremation place, the "eternal place" and also the "stone house" (Rutherford, 2007:223-224), i.e. tomb, burial vault. Theo van den Hout distinguished two dimensions in the ritual, the first - the physical body of the king, his "natural body" and the second - the institutional body, the "political body", represented by the statue (van den Hout, 1994). Other texts and small text fragments, related to funeral rituals, have also survived.²

It is clear from the texts that the deceased was cremated (and after cremation beer, wine and valkhi³ (ritual drink)⁴ were used to extinguish the fire), or inhumation. During inhumation, the deceased was placed in a large pitcher/pithos, in a bent position, with the head facing the southeast. Haas believes that this form of burial was common for the poor population (Haas, 1994:233). The fact that in some cases the dead was buried under the floor of the house is also interesting. This should

¹ CTH 450: first and second day, Vs. I, §1 (1-2); Vs. II, §16" (54-55); CTH 450.II.1, KUB 39.6, §2 (4-5), §3 (6)

² E.g.: CTH 450.II.1, CTH 450.II.2, CTH 450.II.3, CTH 450.III.5.A. KUB 39.15, CTH 450.III.9. KUB 39.17, CTH 450.III.15. KUB 39.31, CTH 451, CTH 459. KUB 60.87, CTH 667.1.G. IBOT 2.130, CTH 488.

³ Probably it should be mead: *walḫi-/walaḫḫi-* (n.), *walḫiyant-* (c.) (= KAŠ.LÀL).

⁴ The Georgian rule is interesting in this regard: when the deceased was taken to the cemetery, in front of whichever house they were passing, a member of that family would take out the ashes, put them on the ground and pour water on them. It should be a surviving imitation of the extinguishing of the cremation pyre (Akhvashvili, 2007).

depict the belief of the family of the deceased that the person who has moved in the other world still participates in his living relatives' daily life. It was a symbolic expression of the idea of family being together. The Hittites did not used to have pompous royal burial vault and tombs like Egypt. So far, nothing that can be identified as a royal tomb has been found (Bryce, 2002:179). Huge necropolises in the immediate vicinity of settlements have not yet been discovered, or erosion over the millennia has completely erased all traces of burials. In Hittite funeral ritual, it can be seen that the dead were cremated outside the burial vault. After the cremation, women collect the bones of the deceased and arrange them in a silver bowl filled with oil. Then they take these bones, wrap them in shroud and place them on various kind of chairs: if it was a man - on a throne, if it was a woman - on a small backless chair. Then, the bones of the deceased were taken from the cremation ground, to the ark, where there was a bedroom with a bed on which the bones would rest. No human bones were found in Trialeti and Zurtaketi kurgan either. B. Kuftin assumed that the dead body was cremated. Fragments of human teeth have been confirmed in some of Trialeti's kurgan. According to B. Kuftin, the deceased was cremated outside the kurgan, and the cremated remains were placed in the tomb - ashe of the deceased directly on the bed, as it is also described in the Hittite funeral ritual. In the decorated chamber of the kurgans, the deceased is rested on a cart (Kurgans #4, #5, #10 of Bedeni and #1 and #2 of Tsnori), or on a wooden bed (Kurgans #5 of Trialeti, LXXXVI) (Kuftin, 1941:100; gobejshvili, 1981:32,34,39,47,93,99; Dedabrishvili, 1979:22,40; narimanishvili, 2015:97). Sh. Dedabrishvili expressed the opinion that, before buried in the main grave, the deceased was laid in the circular structure built under the embankment of Tsnori #2 kurgan (Dedabrishvili, 1979:24). This circular structure may be equated with the "bedroom" where the Hittites used to rest the bones of the deceased after cremation. Considering all this, we agree with B. Kuftin's opinion that the kurgans found in the South Caucasus can similar to the Hittite "stone house" (Kuftin, 1941:81-83). The Hittite "Stone House" and the burial mounds in the territory of Georgia, in particular the stone kurgans (for example: XXVIII-XXXI of Sabidakhcha, XLI-XLIII, XLIV of Tabazkuri, almost all burial mounds of Zurtaketi, almost all six burial mounds of Verin Naveri) must have been similar in their purpose (narimanishvili, 2015:39; beriashvili, 1982:49). For example, burials in the kurgans of the Beden culture are quadrangular shape pole or stone structures, tombs. Stone-built above-ground burials are more abundant in the culture of Trialeti and are distinguished by their diversity. Kurgans excavated in Meskheta have stone walls covered with large stone slabs. The six tombs of Lori Byrd are also of similar construction (narimanishvili, 2015:40-41). Presumably Sum.: É.NA₄ could have been like this, it is a tomb, burial, which the Hittites often used in texts (e.g.: funeral rites) as "stone house", with the same meaning. There is an opinion that the "stone house" are a small quadrangular building of Yazilikaya, and it could also have been in the courtyards of Bogazkoi I temple (Brentje, 1999:69). At the same time, the Hittite words themselves are noteworthy: Éḫešta/i – Hitt.: shrine/temple of the dead (temple of the deities of the underworld), tomb, shrine. Éḫaštiyaš – (remains, bones) crypt. In this very spot we should pay attention to the "tent" mentioned in the Hittite funeral ritual. E. Gogadze, during the discussion of the funeral ritual with inhumation and cremation rules, also refers to the circular stone structures of the South Caucasus.⁵ He sees a similarity between this type of construction and the "tent" or "stone house" described in Hittite texts for funeral rituals (gogadze, 1972:93). The circular constructions may have something in common with the "stone house", but cannot be connected with the "tent". We cannot

⁵ D. Narimanishvili believes that the circular stone structures characteristic of the South Caucasus (Tsnori, Lori Bird, the settlement near the Abuli "Cyclope" fortress) embodied the archetypal building - the house of the ancestors (Narimanishvili, 2015:45).

equate the "stone house" with the "tent" also, since the "stone house" must have been a pre-constructed stone structure – a tomb, while the tent was specially set up for the ritual. For example, when the statue of the deceased is removed from the chariot, it is brought into the tent and set down on the silver throne. If the deceased is a woman, she is set down on a small backless golden chair and a dinner is held. Sitting the statue of the deceased down in the tent in this way appears in the ritual many times, and on different days (8-9, 10-11, 12-13 days). When the ritual is over, the tent (apparently it is taken apart) is brought inside the gate. We think that the tent was probably set up between the tomb and the sacrificial place (where they burned the offering and also brought and threw the ashes of various kind of offerings, on the open place away from the altar, it must have been in the field). Presumably, the tent should be a symbolic expression of the earthly life, a temporary stand, and since the statue of the deceased is especially placed on a throne/chair, it may even be an imitation of a palace/throne.

Ritual-processional roads, which are similar to the "ascending roads" near the Egyptian pyramids, were leading to Trialeti's kurgans. We also find processional roads in Ur and Babylon. D. Narimanishvili believes that the ritual path had the sacred function of connection between the three Realms - Heaven, Earth and the Underworld. The ritual path was also considered for the virtual procession of the deceased in the sky towards the sun (narimanishvili, 2015:236). Ritual paths are also confirmed near Hittite chapels and burial grounds (Makkuin, 1983: 132-136). The holy road led to the temple in Bogazkoi (Neve, 1993: 17-18). The cobbled roads are an organic part of Trialeti's kurgans and seem to be related to the funeral ritual and seems to be constructed for the procession to bring the deceased or his ashes with a chariot in the "funeral hall" (Narimanishvili und and., 2018:212; narimanishvili, 2009:65; japaridze, 1969:68; narimanishvili, 2009:65). Such ritual ways should also be considered in the Hittite funeral ritual, where the chariot, the image/statue of the deceased, the tomb, and the tent appear. The participation of the chariot in the funeral ritual was important in the beliefs of the Hittite and Caucasian peoples, in particular in the Kurgan culture, since the chariot (cartful) is a symbolic expression of earthly life, what is also confirmed by the Georgian folklore material : "*I carried the cart to the sky, it came up with the wheels, lead me with life in this world, and with heavenly bliss - in the next world*" (Jung, 2003: 205-206). The cart/chariot carried tool a person to another world, in an eternal next world (narimanishvili, 2015:104).

For the Hittites, a properly performed funeral ritual was of great importance, as it was a way for the spirit of the deceased to reach the underworld. The spirit had to be appeased, otherwise it would begin to wander dangerously into the world of the alive (Archi, 2008:182-183). In this regard, there is an interesting moment in a Hittite text.⁶ Apparently, the palace made a large offering to avoid the evil influence of dead people who had not received the proper rites: "*They gave 140 shekels of silver and 144 sheep for the oppressed dead people*" (Archi, 2008:183).⁷

The Hittites did not care about preserving the body of the deceased, unlike the Egyptians, who granted great importance to the preservation of the body, mummification. Therefore, for the Egyptians, cremation, unlike the Hittites, was an incredible thing. For the Hittites, cremation was a way to get among the gods, and the grave was a kind of transitional stage between this world and the next one (beriaashvili, 1982:50). The soul of the deceased was completely independent from the body. Funeral rituals properly prepared the deceased and helped them move to and settle in the next world. Deliberately broken grave objects are significant in this regard. This custom probably symbolizes the end of this worldly life of the deceased and at the same time the beginning of that worldly life as a new

⁶ CTH 583.

⁷ KUB 15.5 IV 37-39

one. A person does not end the life with death, he is re-birth into the next world. In Hittite mythology, as in the mythology of the peoples of other ancient civilizations, the cycle of life and death is shown in this way.

Funeral, purification, or etc. rituals sacrifice was of special importance. For example, an animal offering to the deities of the underworld was preferred to be a newborn. E.g.: lamb, kid, as a symbol of purity and innocence, only such sacrifices were acceptable by the gods. The offering could also be of different types, for example: drink/liquid: wine (in various form), beer (in various forms), oil (in various forms), honey, mead, milk; Animal/livestock: lamb, sheep, ram, kid, lamb, billy-goat, bull, /cattle liver, various parts of cattle;⁸ various birds, small birds; Various cereals/cereals: bread (various),⁹ barley, emmer, chervil, malt, coriander, sorghum (root), raisins, etc.; vegetable soup, porridge (e.g.: barley, oat); Dairy products: cheese, butter; fruit, raisins; silver coin etc.¹⁰

In the Hittite world, along with the dead, the remains of cattle, sheep, donkeys, and horses were also found in the tombs. This meant that in the next life they were needed by the king, the royal meadows had to be provided with livestock (Bryce, 2002:178). Bulls, sheep, horses, mules are mentioned in the Hittite funeral ritual.¹¹ In the graves excavated in the South Caucasus, the remains of large and small cattle, whole skeletons of sheep or goats were found (shanshashvili, 2020:246). In particular, offerings are well represented in most of the Kurgan tombs. Remnants of food products (mainly bones) were observed in one part of clay and metal vessels. In Kurgan V animal bones were placed in a large black-glossy two-eared vessel. It seems that already prepared food was put with deceased. The remains of the meal are also seen in the form of large pieces of sacrificial animals or in the complete inclusion of the animal, in particular the sacrifice of an animal (mainly ox, horse, sheep) is confirmed. This can be clearly seen in the Hittite funeral ritual, for example: a wizard woman takes the ashes of the deceased, brings them and throws them where the heads of horses and bulls were burned. "They give drink and food to the deceased", they sacrifice an ox and a sheep (Brentje, 1999:64-67). According to J. Mellaart, the bull was a symbol of life and male fertility in ancient Anatolia (Mellaart, 1963:52). Menhirs of the South Caucasus also depict a sacrificial bull, which embodies the male deity of fertility and rebirth. Belief in the sacred power of the cult of the bull, formed among the ancient population of the South Caucasus, has survived to this day among the local population (narimanishvili, 2015:76).

The sacrificed animal parts are also mentioned in the Hittite funeral ritual, (eg: horse's head, bull's head, fleece (skin)), after the cremation of the deceased, the ritual continues, where the soul's praise is drunk and a funeral meal is held. Heads and limbs, skins of sacrificed cattle, bulls, were found in the excavated mounds also in the South Caucasus. Whole and divided animal bones indicate that the ritual continues even after the burial of the deceased. It seems that a ritual was held at the grave to commemorate the soul of the deceased, which included a funeral ceremony and the arrangement of a funeral table (narimanishvili, 2015:241).

⁸ The heart, head, chest, ribs, legs were also considered pure sacrificial parts: KBo 13.101 Vs. 18; KUB 10.88 Rs. IV 8'-10'; KUB 27.1 Vs. I 15-16; KBo 23.42 (= ChS I12 Nr. 16) Vs. II 8-13; KBo 24.57 + (= ChS 1/2 Nr. 17) Vs. II 3-16; KBo 29.213; KUB 32.123 + (= StBoT 30, 1985, 304-311) Rs. III 48-51.

⁹ There were many types of bread, different shapes were baked, or different figures were depicted on the bread, for example: sun, moon, stars.

¹⁰ We find the sacrifice of silver and copper coins in ancient Georgian rituals. For example: during construction, they were carried to the four corners of the foundation (Khazaradze, 2002:255), to sacrifice for eye diseases (Abakelia, 1997:95).

¹¹ CTH 450.1.1.1: 8-9 day, §9" (42). §15" (75).

According to B. Kuftin, the bull's hide was an imitation of the escort for the deceased's long journey to the next world, after the bulls are slaughtered and their meat used for the funeral feast (Kuftin, 1941: 83). A part of the meat was also brought to the dead. Similarly, in the Hittite funeral ritual, there is a mention of fleece, which is brought into the tomb, oxen are killed, which are brought to the cooks. They give food to the dead.

As already mentioned, among the animals sacrificed in the Hittite funeral ritual, a horse (horse's head) is also mentioned. In different parts of Georgia, the horse held an important place in the customs of the cult of the dead. The custom of sacrificing/giving a horse to the deceased was widespread in different parts of Georgia. The "blessed" horse was called the "spirit horse". The deceased was served by a horse blessed in his name in the next world (giorgadze, 1987: 11,13).

In Hittite rituals (funeral, related to the spirit of the dead, etc.), there is mentioned a sacrificing of a sheep, a goat. The sheep is one of those animals whose image people attributed from ancient times to the ability to protect against evil spirits. Maybe because the sheep as usually represented a sacrificial animal (burduli, 2000:117-123). Probably, in the mythological thinking of a certain archaic society, the sheep (ram), the goat -represented the role of a mediator between the middle world and the underworld. In the burial mound found in Georgia (tomb #13), we see the ritual of burying dead on a sheep, which is supposed to be related to the guiding of the deceased through the next world, the sheep carries the hero of the tale from one grave to another (shanshashvili, narimanishvili, 1989:56-60). The ritual of burying deceased on sheep was associated with representations of the journey of the soul to the next world, where the sheep was an escort, a guide, connecting this world and the next world (narimanishvili, 2015:110). The Georgian mythological hero – Yakhsar, who went to the underworld, returns to earth after sacrificing a four horned and four eared sheep (tsanava, 1992:11). Goats also figure in rituals related to the cult of the dead, as well as in healing rituals (abak'elia, 1997:37).

In the Hittite sources, among the sacrificial we sometimes find animals (pig, dog, puppy, snake, donkey, rabbit, etc.)¹² which were not eaten, but were allowed as a sacrifice. Basically, such a sacrifice is connected to the deities of the underworld (Haas, 1994:647). Perhaps this is why they were considered impure animals, since the Hittites considered dogs and pigs to be particularly unclean animals (Haas, 2003:407; Cognetti, 2021:177-179). They could not come close to the temple, holy places, sanctuaries, and the offerings intended for the deities. E.g.: after eating pork, a person was considered impure, he could not enter the temple. In the "Valkui ritual of the priestess of the night goddess", it is said: *"If a person eats the urura-plant in a dream, or eats pork, or if he touches pork with divine providence..."*; *"If a person in a dream eats the urura-plant (or) the flesh of a pig, ... or even by divine providence touches the skin of a pig."*¹³ Here it is clearly seen that touching a pig, the skin of a pig, and eating pork even in a dream made a person impure and then it was necessary conducting an appropriate sacrificial ritual. It is worth noting in this case that in Babylonian belief, Lamashtu - a female devil, the cause of death, who rises from the underworld, spreads diseases among the population and abducts children, she is often depicted kneeling or standing on a donkey, or with the ears of a donkey, holding snakes and nurture a pig and a dog. According to Georgian beliefs, dogs and pigs¹⁴ are considered impure

¹² Whole skeletons and fragments of skeletons of oxen, sheep, horses, dogs, pigs, deer, wolves, rabbits, turtles, fish and birds were confirmed in the rich tombs of Nerkin Naver #1 Daoshakan #30 (Simonjan, 1984: 126; Kalantarjan 2004: 69; Narimanishvili, 2015:242).

¹³ CTH 496.1, §1 (3-4), §7' (35, 37)

¹⁴ In some parts of Georgia, certain traditions have survived even today. The Maghrian ritual "Odudia Samgario" (praying with pig) is interesting, which the head of the family used to pay for himself. On this day, four cheese cakes were baked, a piglet and a rooster were killed. They would arrange everything on the wooden platter, attach lighted

creatures, and even today they are always mentioned together in a negative context. According to ancient beliefs, the snake is the protector of the hearth and the family. The snake is renewed, reborn, and therefore immortal. By its properties it gives away fertility, wisdom, prophecy and immortality. It lives under the ground, embodies the spirits of the ancestors, and therefore knows all the secrets. Because it embodies the souls of the dead, it is therefore an animal of the ancestors,¹⁵ it means, it is also related to the cult of the ancestors (the dead go underground to be reborn again). He can predict the future and is a source of wisdom in general (narimanishvili, 2015:204-205). According to Georgian beliefs, the sacred snake is a chthonic creature, therefore it is connected with the world of the dead. At the same time, it is related to the idea of wizard and wisdom. Medicinal properties were also attributed to the snake and it is often used in medicinal formulas: the snake's shirt was considered a medicine, the "horn" of the snake was used as a medicine for abdominal pain (abak'elia, 1991; abak'elia, 1997:11-17). Reptiles (especially snakes), rodents are associated with the underworld also also in Hittites, therefore they must carry pathogens to the underworld (Haas, 2003:467). Therefore, they are often mentioned in magic-therapeutic, healing spells, especially the snake.¹⁶

Among the Hittite traditions we meet a tradition of sacrificing the pig (although it is considered an unclean animal in some cases). It is also interesting that in the funeral ritual, on the eighth-ninth day, the so-called "A pig carries water" ritual was performed, where a pig played the main role.¹⁷ In Georgian tradition, Christmas Eve and Christmas had great significance as the beginning of the New Year and were loaded with many magical rituals, which was aimed at overcoming evil spirits, strengthening health, prosperity, fertility, etc. (abak'elia, 1997:92). In these rituals, the pig hold the main as an offering. In Korgan VII, piles of meaty parts of small and large cattle, as well as pig jaws, were found in different places of the burial pit. Bones of ox, sheep and pig have also been recorded in Korghan VIII (narimanishvili, 2015:106-108). According to Georgian beliefs, it is the day of "Misroba/Nisroba" in the calendar of festival days. In some villages, on the day of "Mirsoba", was held the festival of pagan shrine - "Jege" or "Jege-Misarion", to which they sacrificed a pig and prayed for health: to heal those who are sick in spirit, those who are sick with eyes, from ear, head, and back pain. On the "Mirsoba/Nirsoba" day, the head man of the family would put his hand on the hind legs of the pig, lead it around the hearth and recite the spell several times: *"Today's 'Mirsoba' is welcome!" Give me and my wife and children a good fortune: make me happy, drive me away from all bad and evil; protected from every bad road and water, your blessed name.*" Then a pig was killed, the housewife cooked two round loaf and an egg, then all the family members took one by one, rolled it and recited a spell for "health of the eye". At the end of the prayer, they ate a round loaf and an egg (abak'elia, 1997:92-96, 106). To some extent, this text of the Georgian spell reminds us of the text of the Hittite spell: *"May good come into the house! And let the eyes find (all kinds of) evils and drive them away! Let the holy water purify the evil tongue, impurity, murder, sin, curse, fear, common (evil) talk!"*¹⁸ It is also interesting that in Hittite

candles on it. The head man of the family together with his eldest son would take the wooden platter to "Odudia Samgarios Lagvan". They would both kneel down. The elder would turn wooden platter to the right three times and pray that God would give him health and protect him from all illness and bad occasions. Then he would turn the top of the pitcher, pour wine inside, turn a candle and incense around the head and burn it on the ashes. They would eat a chicken, a rooster's head, and a pig's heart and liver there, then they would go back home, the table would be spread and the head of the family would be blessed. (Abakelia, 1997: 92).

¹⁵ Jeliade, 2000: 314-316.

¹⁶ CTH 765. KBo 12.100 Vs. 1-7.

¹⁷ CTH 450.1.1.1: 8-9 day, §5'-§12".

¹⁸ CTH 446. B II (48-56).

rituals and spells, the rotation and waving of offerings, ritual objects/inventory, on the statue of the deity, on a person, on the sick, on the dead person, often happens. For example, in the Hittite funeral ritual, a billy-goat is killed for a deceased person and is waved/turned over the dead's head¹⁹ while reciting an incantation; Or when wine-pourer performs the libation for the soul of deceased, he turns the baked clay bowl, throw it on the ground and says:²⁰ *"I take a live fish, and I turn it over the deity"* - it is said in the Valkui ritual of the priestess of the night goddess²¹. It is significant that in Georgian spells and rituals, also was performed the spinning of ritual objects, for example: a black-handled knife on a person who was either sick, under the evil eye, or bound.

As we have mentioned, in the Hittites sources we also meet dogs and puppies sacrifice. In the Georgian cultural tradition, the symbol of the dog and associated with it wolf appears in many contexts. One of them is dog of the next world, therefore the dog – psychopomp (abak'elia, 1997:57). That the dog was connected with the underworld can also be seen in the following Georgian, particularly in Kakhetian, tradition: *"When they tie the dead man's bread, they tie it for the cat and the dog, so that the dog and the cat do not cross their legs to him in that world."* A dog and a cat appear in the paintings for the dead in the Lifanali cycle in Svaneti (abak'elia, 1997:76). Dogs (greyhound) are sometimes executors of the will of higher beings, sometimes helpers of people in distress (they avoid expected danger, warn) (abak'elia, 1997:62). A dog's skull was also found in Kozhreb # 2 kurgan along with cattle bones (narimanishvili, 2015:106-108).

Birds played an important role in the Hittite funeral ritual. For example, on the thirteenth day, a special ritual was performed with birds (*lahhanzana*^{MUŠEN} – water bird: duck?, goose?, swan?, crane?, quail?, seagull?;²² ^{MUŠEN}HURRI – hole bird: partridge/quail).²³ Their copies were also made for the ritual: from wood (which were decorated with silver and gold), wool and dough. Also there is mentioned: *ardussa*-bird²⁴, *arta*-bird,²⁵ *aramni* - a metal cult object with the image of a three-legged bird²⁶, which is brought to crypt.²⁶ In the text "Journey of the Soul to the Underworld" the *huwala*-bird is mentioned,²⁷ "in the ritual of purifying the house and invoking the deities of the underworld" hawk is mentioned in connection with Ishtar.²⁸ It is interesting that Ishtar has on the left ear earring of magical bird.²⁹ Eagle in the construction ritual.³⁰ In the purification ritual: Magical bird *šurašura*-bird.³¹ Sacrifice of birds (burning them in sacrificial pits) often happens in Hittite rituals. Apparently, the bird represents a special magical sacrifice to the "ancestral" underworld deities. Birds (goose, crane, stork, etc.) were associated with the goddess of love and war, death and life. According to D. Narimanishvili Bronze Age inhabitants of south Caucasus must have similar mythological believes. The image of the bird on Middle

¹⁹ CTH 450: first and second day, Vs. I §6, 17;

²⁰ CTH 450: eighth and ninth day, KUB 39.35: §34*, 178-180; twelfth and thirteenth day, Rs. IV (KUB 30.19 + KUB 30.20 + KUB 39.7), §48', 266.

²¹ CTH 496.1. §3 (16-17)

²² CTH 450.1.1.1: 12-13 day, §20 (96-104).

²³ CTH 450.1.1.1: 12-13 day, §20 (105).

²⁴ CTH 450.1.1.1: 8-9 day, §8" (34).

²⁵ CTH 450.1.1.1: 8-9 day, §8" (36,37); §12" (55).

²⁶ CTH 450.1.1.1: 10-11 day, §8" (44,45);

²⁷ CTH 457.7.1: KUB 43.60. §1,23.

²⁸ CTH 446. Vs. C II (5).

²⁹ CTH 446. Rs. II (25-26).

³⁰ CTH 414: §26 (39-41).

³¹ CTH 400.1: §15"" (78), §17"" (91).

Bronze Age ceramics of the South Caucasus was associated with the cult of Ishtar-Shavushka, or her Caucasian equivalent (narimanishvili, 2015:209).

There were several forms of offerings: serving to the deities, cooking, burning, destroying, fragmentation, eating some part (for example: beef fat), "taking a bite, nipping off" of the entrails (especially the liver). During the sacrifice, as we mentioned above, the color of the offering was of great importance, black was offered to the deities of the underworld, and white was offered to the deities above-ground.

According to the Georgian mountaineers, any misfortune, illness was considered to be a punishment of the deities, therefore, to win their hearts, they slaughtered animals (sheep, calf, bull), sacrificed copper, silver, "white money", estate, etc. They brewed beer, baked bread (mindadze, 1981:91-93). They also cut the sacrificial animal, cook it, and then eat a certain part of it. In general, a certain number of offerings were offered to the deities: three,³² seven,³³ nine,³⁴ twelve, and sometimes thirty, etc (Haas, 1994:641). Basically, a person sacrificed what he himself ate and drank,³⁵ although there were special offerings intended only for the deities. As mentioned above, sacrifices were made to the deities of the underworld in pits and wells. The presence of sacrificial wells and pits is also confirmed in Georgia in the pre-Christian period (licheli, 2001:40-43; pitskhelauri, 1973:113; shanshashvili, narimanishvili, 2015:211; makharadze, 1994:12). The Hittites believed that these places connected the land with the underworld. Also, the hearth had an important ritual role. It was a connecting place between land and underground. Fire also had the function of magical purification. In the Early and Middle Bronze Age settlements of the South Caucasus, the hearth stood in the center of almost every house. In mytho-religious thought, the hearth represents the sacred place of each family around which it gathers (narimanishvili, 2015:225), "founding its family religion, the cult of the ancestors, and later, even in the age of the common cult, the hearth maintains its central place as the navel of the world" (Haas, 1994:127). Therefore, in rituals in general, and especially during sacrifices, the hearth had a great symbolic load.

Among the Hittites, the entrance to the underworld is caves, wells, pits, artificially cut pits, holes (Haas, 1994:127): *ḫatteššar* – "den, pit, hole", i.e. the entrance to the underground world; *apita*, ^(D)*api*, (= BÜR) – hole, well, pit (sacrificial pit for underearth/underworld deities); ^DKASKAL.KUR (=PILLAT) (deified) underground water flow, spring, entrance to the underworld; ^DPÚ (deified) spring, well. In Georgian legends, there are narrow "opening for crawling through" (k'ik'nadze, 1996:109) to enter the underworld. Sacrifices were often made in pits³⁶ and wells, in the "dark land"³⁷ to win the hearts of the deities of the underworld, so that they would never come to the surface of the earth and bring various kinds of calamities: storms, floods, fires, diseases, wars, blood, etc.

The heroes of the Georgian folk tales descend into the underworld from pits and wells. For example, the hero of the Georgian folk tale "Nabolara" enters the underworld through a well (Gruzinskie narodnye skazki, 1988; shanshashvili, narimanishvili, 1989:57). It is noteworthy that two pits filled with holy ashes and various objects, including large clay vessels filled with holy ashes, were

³² KBo 15.36 + KBo 21.61 Vs. II 10; KBo 21.100 Vs. 15'; KUB10.11 Rs. V 3-4; VBoT 24 Vs. II 45, Rs. IV 8, 28.

³³ KBo 21.23 Vs. I 5; KUB 51.5 Rs. Kol. 8'; KUB 59.29 Vs. II 16'; KBo 5.2 Vs. II 33-34; KUB 7.506; IBoT 3.148.

³⁴ KBo 2.17 1; KBo 19.128, Vs. III 2-4; KBo 21.34, Vs. II 16; KUB 7.33 Vs. 17; KUB 7.355'; KUB 7.50 6'; KUB 15.31 Rs. III 60; IBoT 3.148 Vs. ISO.

³⁵ KUB 13.4 Vs. I 21 f.

³⁶ It is interesting that in some cases, a cult vessel (*kupta/i*) buried in the ground was placed in the sacrifice pit, in which offerings were placed (Khazaradze, 2002:252-253).

³⁷ CTH 457.8, §10, 37.

discovered at the Meli-Ghele I chapel in Georgia (pitskhelauri, 1973:113). Perhaps these pits were used for a ritual of connection with the chthonic world (shanshashvili, narimanishvili, 2015:211). Some of the temples identified on Vani Nakalakari are related to chthonic beings. A pit, which is a monumental "well", has been discovered on the lower terrace of Nakalakari. The length of the well, dug so far, is 21 m. This pit was associated with the Mysteries of Hekate. The cult of Hekate was closely related to the extensive hypostases of the Great Mother of the Gods. This chthonic deity is recognized as the treacherous, ruthless goddess. Hekate was "...famous for her ruthlessness"; "...extremely well-versed in deadly and healing means..." During the Mysteries of Hekate, victims were thrown to the so-called "throat of vicious", this is a circular hole that looks like a well. The monumental pit/well found out in Sairkhe should be the bearer of the same functions (licheli, 2001:40-43).

The Hittites were well aware of the inevitability of death, which they saw as part of the natural course of events. Of course, no one could live forever. This idea is very well expressed in the words of priest Kantutsil (Kapeluś, 2010:431): *"Life is connected with death. Death is related to life. Man does not live forever. His days are counted."*³⁸

In the Hittite language we find the following terms expressing death: death – *ak(k)-/ ek(k)-, agqatar / aqqatar (ÚŠ/ UG₆-tar; MÁTU); ḫalliya weḫ-* to turn/ turn towards the (death) day (= death); *annaš šiwatt-* (= UD^{KAM} AMA) mother's day, i.e. death day; death; UD^{UM} (an U₄-UM) *ŠIMTI* Day of Destiny (= Day of Death); UD^{UM} *ŠIMTI-KA* the day of your destiny (= the day of your death); UD^{KAM} *ABI=ŠUAMA=ŠU* Your father's (and) mother's day (= your death day) (Tischler, 2008:238).

Death was supposed to be the natural end of life at a predetermined moment, as predicted by the gods. The date of death is determined at birth, when a person's fate was established by the gods. This was the natural death of a person. Deities can decide a person's life span at will, they can also decide a person's untimely death. Violent death was considered "bad". This is how the Hittites distinguished between natural and untimely (for any reason: illness, war, etc.) death. This can be clearly seen from Khatušil's phrase: *"One was killed with a weapon, and the other on the day (determined by their fate)"* (Otten, 1981:26-27).³⁹ The phrase *ūm la šimāti* - "unwanted day" was used to denote an untimely death.⁴⁰ In the Hittite language, it was expressed by the terms - *meḫur maninkuwan, maninkuwant- witt* - short life, short year, that is, short life, premature death.

The term *henkan-/hinkan*-plague, black plague, epidemic, which was also used to denote death, is interesting. The expression *markištauwaš ḫinkan* meant sudden death (or an explosive epidemic / black plague). Although death was generally considered a natural phenomenon, people cared about long life. They prayed to the deities for long life, rituals were performed to protect them from illness and death.

In the Hittite language we find the term *akkant-* (= GIDIM, *EṬEMMU*) which denotes the soul of the dead, and is also used to denote the deceased, the dead. In general, according to the Hittite concept, a person consists of a soul - *ištanzan(a)-/ZI* and a body - *tuekka-/tukka-/NI.TE* (= *RAMĀNU*). Soul and body are possessed by gods/deities, humans, animals. The body dies, but the soul continues to live in the afterlife. The arrival of the deceased in the next world depends on its purity, if it is impure, burdened with sins, it is handed over to the goddess of the dead for judgment.

Oath breakers - they cannot find peace in that country based on breaking of the oath and are cursed by the goddess. Therefore, great importance is attached to purification rituals and spells. If the

³⁸ CTH 373. KUB 30.10.Vs. 20' (§5') 34-37

³⁹ CTH 81. IV 45-46

⁴⁰ CTH 450, pirveli da meore dReVs. I §1, §2

deceased king is purified, then he rushes to the circle of heavenly deities, the text informs us: *"Leave me to the gods of the sky and make me free from the circle of dead spirits"* (Haas, 1976:210). It must be emphasized that only among the Hittites we find the term DINGIR^{LIM}-iš kiš- "became a god (becoming a deity)",⁴¹ this was said about the king (queen) only after his death, unlike the Egyptians, who worshiped the pharaoh during his lifetime. The Hittite funeral ritual⁴² begins with the following words: *"When there is a great calamity in Khatusa, or the king or queen becomes a god, then) all, adult (and) little, take their reed pipes and begin to wail."*⁴³

In ancient Hittite texts, as we have already mentioned, we find "mother's day", "the day of his father and mother", or "the mother came to him, took him by the hand and guided him",⁴⁴ as a synonym for death, that is, after death, the human soul returns to the cosmic parent from which the person once came. Death is usually considered an entry into the mother's womb for rebirth (abak'elia, 2017:77). It is interesting that in the Sumerian myth "Utu Ama-bi-Shegia" the phrase *"Utu (the sun deity), returning to his mother"*, is a synonym of the dusky, sunless space, i.e. literally *"Utu, upright goes to his mother"* (k'ik'nadze, 1979:18-19), i.e. returns to its origin.

In this regard, the symbolism of the moon is also interesting. Its cyclical phases: new moon, evolving moon, full moon, declining /waning moon, rebirth, embody the cyclical concepts of Middle Eastern belief systems. Lunar symbolism helped to integrate a huge mass of apparently unrelated facts recorded in nature into a single system characterized by birth, death and rebirth. Just as the disappearance of the moon is never final, the disappearance of humans will never be final (Eliade, 1954:86-87).

In one of the fragments of the Hittite funeral ritual,⁴⁵ the pre-burial ritual is completed (Ottén, 1958a: 94-97): the purifying priest stands on the roof of the house and asks the deities of the earth where the deceased is going, the answer is: *"The mother ... took him in her arms and led him!"*⁴⁶ That is, the deceased returns to his parent, he goes Where he was born - in the nether world, in the underworld (beriašvili, 1982:47). *"The mother ... led"* here implies showing the way in a world that is far and dangerous. Such a path is mentioned in the Hittite ritual: *"Your paths must be greased with sheep's fat!"* (Haas, 2010:168).⁴⁷ You can also find the "Oil Path"⁴⁸. In the Hittite text describing the journey of the soul of the deceased, the "Great Path"⁴⁹ is mentioned. In Sumerian it means "the road of no return".⁵⁰

It is also interesting that in the funeral ritual, the statue of the deceased is placed on the emery pile. This may be a symbolic expression of the fact that as the seed sprouts, so must new life sprout in thee next world, that is, it is born again in that country. Therefore, the day when the soul leaves the body is called "good day", because it is the day of rebirth. The soul passes into eternity. I think, in this

⁴¹ "God became" means "deceased" and not "died", that is, he changed his face, moved from one state to another and continues to exist. i.e. According to the Hittite concept, the deceased does not end his life, but starts again in another form.

⁴² CTH 450. KUB 30.16; KUB 30.15; KUB 39.19

⁴³ CTH 450, first and second day, Vs. I §1, §2

⁴⁴ KUB 30.28 + KUB 39.23; Haas, 1976:210; Haas, 2010:169. In this regard Sumerian word "ama-ar-gi" (ama-ar-gi4) is interesting. The word means release, and literally translation is "return to mother" (Kiknadze, 1979:136).

⁴⁵ KUB 30.28 + 39.23

⁴⁶ KUB 30.28, Rs. 11-12

⁴⁷ KUB 39.15, Rs IV, 1-2

⁴⁸ CTH 457.4, §1, 11.

⁴⁹ CTH 457.7.1, KUB 43.60, §3, 42.

⁵⁰ har-ra-an-gi₄-gi₄ (Katz, 2003: 41, 316, 318-319)

regard, there is an interesting similarity with the fact that in the graves excavated in the South Caucasus, heads of wheat and grain are interwoven. Scattering heads of wheat or grains around the deceased is connected with a certain ritual. In three tombs, the deceased had field flowers put with (shanshashvili, 2020:246). From all this, it is clear that among the Hittites, the sun cult had a very important place in the funeral customs and rituals. This is well shown in Mesopotamia, in particular in the "Epic of Gilgamesh". Gilgamesh follows the path of the sun god - the path of the night. It reaches the station of the country where the border owner's house is located, with the Khuritian name - "Biduri". This house is a sign that the dead reach the last stage of their earthly journey and enter the underworld from here. Here he will meet Urshanab, the ferryman on the river. For one month and 15 days, he led Urshanab's ship to the abode of the dead. From the Hittite funeral ritual, we learn that the deceased was placed on a chariot associated with the sun deity – it is his attribute. This does not happen by chance, the deceased returns to his "mother", and the sun passes through this path.

According to the Hittites, the abode of the dead was in the far west. They used the term *Wellu-* (Ú.SAL) - meadow/field to denote the otherworld. They believed that people will continue to live in that country. This is confirmed by the meadow, vines, herd, plow, decorations, jewelry, dishes, etc. mentioned in the "funeral ritual", that is everything, the Hittites thought was necessary for a person in life, and will be needed by him even after death. On the one hand, the Hittites believed in the existence of an eternal, idyllic meadow like paradise, but it seems that this was only for the privileged class, since in the texts we also find pessimistic attitudes about that country. For example, for the Hittites, the world beyond the grave was the "dark earth," a subterranean world inhabited by infernal forces and the bloodless shadows of the dead. This is a place where people *"[...] he does not recognize [them]. One doesn't recognize the other. Sisters by the same mother do [not re]cognize each other. Brothers by the same father do [not re]cognize each other. A mother does [not] recognize [her] own child. [A child] does [not] recognize [its own] mother. [...] does [not] recognize [...]. [...] does [not] recognize [...]. From a fi[ne] table they do [no]t eat. From a [fi]ne stool they do [n]ot eat. From a [f]ine cup they do not drink. They do not eat [goo]d food. They do not drink my good drink. They eat bits of mud. They [dri]nk muddy waters (?)"* (Hoffner, 1988:191-192).⁵¹ One Hittite text⁵² that has reached us in an incomplete form describes the journey of the soul to the world of the dead, a ritual intended for a deceased woman. Rituals helped the soul to overcome the dangerous journey to the next world. There seems to have been a widespread belief that by fulfilling the appropriate rituals, the soul could have a favorable destiny in the afterlife, perhaps even attaining a state of permanent happiness (Archi, 2008:171,176). Therefore, the ritual for the deceased had to be performed scrupulously correctly. The death of the person for whom the ritual was performed took on a cosmic dimension, as if everything stopped. At that time, even nature and animals were motionless: *"[...] the bull is sleeping. The sheep is [sleeping]. The sky is sleeping. [The earth is sleeping]"*.⁵³ Death breaks the unity of body and soul. The soul is inferior, it disappears. It is up to bees to find it on land, water birds in water, and eagles in the sky. Birds and animals (eagle, lamb, ram, ewe) representing nature, force (beat) the soul to leave the land and the life to which it no longer belongs. In the same text there is an interesting phrase: *"The soul is of the sun deity, the soul is of the deities"*,⁵⁴ i.e. the soul belongs to gods, that is, it becomes a part of eternity, passes into eternity.

⁵¹ CTH 457.7.2: KBo 22.178

⁵² CTH 457: KBo 22.178 + KUB 48.109 + 43.60

⁵³ CTH 457.7.1: KUB 43.60, §1. 1-4

⁵⁴ CTH 457.7.1: KUB 43.60, §3. 45-46

It is also interesting that the day of death was connected with birth. If the child died during childbirth, it was taken to the purification priests (officials in the ritual of the dead).⁵⁵ The same priest played a central role in other birth rituals⁵⁶, and because he was associated with the Hurrian-Luwian circle of belief, perhaps the concept of the relationship between birth and death is derived from the Hurrian tradition and indirectly from Mesopotamia (Kapelus, 2010:434).

Based on the similarities we discussed above, it can be concluded that the Hittite funeral rituals and representations must have been created under the influence of the traditions and beliefs of the Hattian indigenous population related to the South Caucasus.

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