

Review article

RELIGION IN HITTITE ANATOLIA.
SOME COMMENTS ON “VOLKERT HAAS: GESCHICHTE DER
HETHITISCHEN RELIGION”¹

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1. Hittite Religion in “Context”

The term “Hittite religion” is a common designation for different religious beliefs and syncretistic tendencies within the central area of the political influence of the Hittites dating from the 18th to the early 12th century B.C.E. As is well known Hittite religion shows different “cultic strata” (“Kultschichten”) which can—in chronological order—mainly be attributed to the Hattians of Anatolian stock, the Indo-European Hittites who are found in central Anatolia from the end of the 3rd millenium, their nearly contemporaneous Luwian neighbours who later on settle in south and southeast Anatolia, and last but not least the Hurrians who begin to play a dominant role since the middle of the 2nd millenium mediating also Syrian and Babylonian thoughts and concepts to Anatolia. Therefore Volkert Haas begins his book with an overview of the historical development in Anatolia (p. 1-38). From the point of view of the history of religions it is important to mention that from the middle of the 3rd millenium to the middle of the 17th century there did not exist a larger political entity but only about 20 local “kingdoms” (e.g., at Alişar, Alaca Höyük, Kültepe/Kaniš, Hattuša or Zalpa). Then the Hittites built their first centre at Kaniš which dominated a larger area but Kaniš soon lost its leading position to Hattuša. From Hattuša the Old Kingdom emerged and Hittite influence extended to the Black Sea, the Upper Euphrates, Northern Syria, and maybe even to the Mediterranean Sea. Since the later 16th century the Luwian population of Kizzuwatna had become an integral and important part of the Hittite sphere being at the crossroads between central Anatolian, Hurrian and Syrian cultures. When in the early 14th century the New Kingdom, the “Hittite Empire”, began to shape its form with the rule of Suppiluliuma I., the ethnic and cultural pluralism still increased as the political expansionism added further foreign elements to “Hittite” culture. Based on this historical context Haas can emphasize throughout his book the connections with Babylonian, Hurrian and

Syrian religious ideas which merge with Hattian and—to a lesser degree—Indo-European Hittite concepts.

Not only historical and political components are important but also the geographical and climatical aspect: From Upper Mesopotamia and Northern Syria to southeast and central Anatolia agriculture and economic life depend on rain which makes cultivation possible. As people are depending on the same atmospheric phenomena for living in these different areas they also express their religious beliefs in a comparable way. Therefore it is not possible to explore Hittite religion without taking into consideration traditions from Syria and Mesopotamia. Special attention is paid to cosmologies and calendar myths, e.g., the myth of the Hurrian grain-god Kumarbi. The myth begins with the succession of godly rulers in heaven—Alalu, Anu, Kumarbi, Tešup, the latter always deposes his predecessor. Haas connects this myth with Babylonian traditions (cf. the *Enuma Eliš* or the *Harab Myth*) and puts the different rulers in relation to the (agricultural) year (p. 85f): The new year begins with the castration of Anu by Kumarbi who bites off the former's genitals. As Kumarbi is the grain, he begins his rule with the growing grain in spring (March) but he himself is deposed at the time of harvest (July) by the storm-god Tešup and sent to the netherworld at the time of sowing in September or October. In terms of the calendar Tešup's reign also comes to an end at this time. Alalu with his stormy rains rules during the autumn and Anu from January to March. This "seasonal pattern" and the application of the calendar which Haas also uses for his interpretation of the Ugaritic Baal cycle and the Hittite myth of Illuyanka does not neatly fit these myths.² Maybe it can explain the hostility between Kumarbi and Tešup but it cannot explain why Tešup's rule should have come to an end in October. It also leaves open why Kumarbi should be left on "earth" from July to September during the reign of Tešup who only then sends him—as the new seed—down to the netherworld. Setting these aspects of Hittite-Hurrian religion in connection to other Ancient Near Eastern myths remains unconvincing. That the Kumarbi cycle clearly shows Mesopotamian influences is beyond question but as a whole it must be treated as an expression of Hurrian-Hittite world view of its own right. As there are some cosmogonical traits within the Kumarbi myth—e.g., the castration of Anu, the separation of heaven and earth with a sew made of copper, Kumarbi's helper Upelluri on whose shoulders heaven and earth have been built—it is notable that Haas describes a bulk of cosmogonical traditions from the

Ancient Near East (p. 106-175). As a difference to Mesopotamia—maybe still by chance—we do not have a creation myth written in Hittite but only hints from diverse sources; just to call attention to a few more besides those in the aforementioned Kumarbi texts: Heaven is the abode of the gods with their palaces, maybe some Hittites conceived heaven made from iron, as an opposite to heaven we find the netherworld with the palace of the (Hurrian) queen of the netherworld. This world is situated directly beneath the earth from which entrances like springs and lakes lead to the other world. The Hattian sun-goddess can be called the lady of the netherworld because the sun enters this part of the cosmos in the west in the evening. According to the importance of agriculture we find the idea that the earth brings forth every form of life therefore she is often called “mother” and some goddesses are her hypostases. Altogether one gets the impression that in Anatolia there have not been so many different cosmogonical traditions as in Mesopotamia. Therefore we should not assume that nearly every aspect is common to all cultures in the Ancient Near East.

Another form of “context” concerns diachrony: Haas tries to reach back to prehistory searching for indications of religious beliefs and practices from the neolithic and the early bronze age in Anatolia (p. 39-78) which live further on mainly in the Hattian cultic stratum. The first important change of religion in Anatolia happens as far as we know in the transition period from the aceramic to the ceramic neolithicum. In the later period we find for the first time a kind of organized pantheon and not only the worship of (deified) ancestors as before. Archaeological data from Catal Höyük (ca. 6380-4900) suggest that there already existed—beside the reverence for the ancestors—the worship of individual gods; the most important cults centered on the bull-god and a female deity representing heaven and earth. The continuity of these personifications of the divine is beyond doubt. Goddesses (or statuettes of a woman) from Catal Höyük are often accompanied by one or two felides, a connection which lives on not only during the chalcolithic and bronze ages, but also in Hittite texts the Hattian goddesses Inara and Tetešhapi have striking affinities to leopards (cf. p. 437sq). It is not impossible to argue that the goddess(es) in the neolithic and chalcolithic periods reflect on the theological level the sociological importance of women and matrilineality because some later texts in which goddesses play a dominant role give slight hints to such sociological circumstances; the myth of Illuyanka is certainly the best-known example for this (cf. p. 419sq). The

adoration of the bull-god also lives on but becomes the subject of change, too (cf. p. 315sq). At the beginning of the 3rd millenium—obviously spreading from Mesopotamia—we find the couple bull-god and goddess for the first time. But the goddess connected with the bull in Anatolia is not an Anatolian one but an import from Syria who only secondarily gets mingled with a local Anatolian goddess. A second change—during the 3rd millenium—outrules the bull from the pantheon because the weather-god supersedes him and consequently also takes over the goddess as his own parhedra. The official Hittite cult since Hattušili I. therefore makes the weather-god of Hatti and the sun-goddess of Arinna (Wurunšemu), who is a Hattian goddess closely connected with the earth as her prime concern, a divine couple; according to the Hurrian influence since the Middle Kingdom this pair gets identified with the Hurrian gods Tešup and Hebat. Despite these historical developments within the pantheon it can be easily seen that the older cult of a divine bull was not totally forgotten, because during a local festival at the Hattian cult centre Nerik women, e.g., sing the “song of the bull”. Other than the Hittites who lived on agriculture depending on the rain given by the weather-god the neolithic and chalcolithic society earned its living by hunting which featured other religious ideas. Judging from archaeological findings one can conclude that shamanistic practices (initiation of the hunter and shamanistic identification with the huntable animal) have not only been familiar to the neolithic people in Anatolia but texts from the Hattian cultic stratum occasionally are open to an interpretation in accordance with shamanistic rites or ideas.

So we can draw a first conclusion about “Hittite” religion which is important for the whole book: The materials from prehistory in Anatolia show traits which—partly—live on in central Anatolia till the 2nd millenium B.C.E. mainly among the Hattian population and form a substantial part of “Hittite” religion. The Hittites proper—that is the Indo-Europeans who began to settle in central Anatolia in the second half of the 3rd millenium—added little from their inherited Indo-European religion to this religious system;³ even Šiu (p. 188sq), the Indo-Europeaeon god of heaven and light, whom Anitta calls “our god” and who is to be considered as one of the most genuine Indo-European gods of the Hittites very soon gets assimilated to the Hattian sun-god thus changing identity and partly losing importance. For the wider context of “Hittite” religion it is important to note that from the 16th century onwards there was a growing Hurrian and Syrian influence

bringing new ideas, gods and rites to Anatolia. So we have to consider all these materials carefully as they have been integrated in the official religion.

Bearing in mind that our available sources on Hittite religion show either a strong Hattian cultic stratum or an influx of Hurrian and Syrian traditions and beliefs one may ask what was “Hittite religion” in reality. With the intention of bringing the question to a somewhat exaggerated conclusion I would like to say that there never existed a Hittite religion for everybody. Hittite religion *sensu strictu* was a syncretistic system favoured by the state since the Old Kingdom. As such a system it reached its absolute climax under Hattušili III. and Tudhaliya IV. in the New Kingdom. “Hittite religion” in this sense was a political affair with only marginal meaning for the common people, whose religious beliefs remained primarily based on local traditions. So we have to try to differentiate between “Hittite Religion” as state religion and the religion(s) in common life when talking about a “Geschichte der hethitischen Religion”.

2. *The Gods, the King, the Festivals, and the State Cult*

“The thousand gods of Hatti” is an often used formula by the Hittites to describe the totality of their pantheon, and the given number is hardly an exaggeration. The very detailed analysis of this pantheon (or panthea) and the ideas about the gods therefore cover a large part of the reviewed book (p. 294-631). Gods are mighty beings who dominate the areas of their competence and due to their might it is possible that the hypostases that emerge from them are a factor accounting for the huge number of gods in Anatolia. In most cases they are venerated in an anthropomorphic form. So they are similar but superior to mankind, a central difference being the gods’ power over the phenomena of nature. But in their characteristics they do not differ from mankind: They fail to die, but they need food and beverages. They suffer hunger or thirst when nobody supplies them with meal-offerings. Like humans gods can be jealous, angry, revengeful, but also friendly, helpful or generous and so humans try to be on good terms with the gods via cultic means. Like humans gods too cannot be only good or only evil. Leaving many gods since the Old Kingdom beside we can state that the prime ranks in the official pantheon in that time were occupied by the sun-goddess of Arinna, her daughter Mezzulla and the weather-god (of Hatti). The weather-god is not only an instance who gives rain but for the official religion—since Pithana’s and Anitta’s rule at Kaniš—he is the

preserver of the cosmic order and gives shelter to the king. The god is the lord and possessor of the country which the king only holds in trust for the god. The sun-goddess of Arinna can be originally characterized as a mother- and earth-goddess of the Hattian cult centre Arinna; her astral aspects are combined with her chthonic aspects because the sun enters every evening the netherworld (later called the “dark earth”) to return beneath the earth to her rising point in the east. Thus a sun-goddess and an earth-goddess are not irreconcilable with each other. In the Old Kingdom Hattušili I. makes her wife of the weather-god. In that time her daughter Mezzula whose centre also was Arinna got her dominant position in the state cult, too. Male and female tutelary deities⁴ also ranked high in the Old Kingdom and most of them originated from a Hattian milieu. Some of them are clearly related to hunting which may be a hint that their origins may reach back to even earlier ages.

With the growing influence of the Hurrians some substantial changes appear: The tutelary deities face a decline of their position maybe due to the fact that such deities were not prominent in Hurrian religious thought. They did not disappear from official cults—as festival texts from the time of Tudhaliya IV. still show—but they are missing to a very large degree in prayers and they never are chosen as a personal tutelary deity from any king then. The weather-god gets identified with the Hurrian weather-god Tešup and the sun-goddess of Arinna is identified with Tešup’s wife Hebat. Hebat’s son Šarruma also takes a high position in the pantheon forming a triad with Tešup and Hebat thus replacing Mezzula from this triad of the official state-pantheon. Another notable change begins to concentrate all the official cults in the capital Hattuša since the Middle Hittite period reaching its climax in the 14th century when the priests tried to organize a uniformed pantheon for all the empire; also the efforts of Tudhaliya IV. to build a lot of temples in the upper town of Hattuša are a sign for this centralization of cults. The growing pantheon of the Hittites with their “thousand gods”⁵ shows one further facet: Foreign gods were adopted to the official pantheon due to political and territorial acquisitions. So they played a role within the state cult but never were really worshipped by the broad masses. It is clear that nearly all the gods emerged from local cult centres and the important ones faced supra-regional veneration from some time onwards. But their local importance did usually not decline so it is not surprising to find local cults till the end of the Hittite state—both according to textual and

archaeological sources (p. 539-615). From these sources it becomes clear that these cults were also integrated into the religion of the state; parts of the great festivals, e.g., take place not only at Hattuša, but the king or the queen celebrate one day or the other of the festival at another centre. One task for future research is here to be mentioned: What is the relationship between official cult and private religion in such centres? Maybe an accurate analysis of local cults (in comparison with rites performed at the capital) will shed further light on everybody's religion.

As already has been said above since the Old Kingdom the weather-god is the lord of the land and the king only administers it for the god. Therefore the king has an important position within religion (cf. p. 181-229). The king's relation to the gods was a subject of historical change thus reflecting the melting of separate Hattian and Indo-European Hittite traditions. In the central Anatolian myth of Illuyanka—also being prominent in the New Year's festival—Hupašiya maybe reflects the idea of an early king who can only rule for a limited time and is to be deposed (and killed) when he cannot guarantee the prospering of nature any more. A ritual for building a new house (or palace) stemming from the Hattian milieu lays emphasis on the fact that the Hattian throne-goddess Hanwašuit (Halmašuit) bestows the kingship and the royal insignia from the sea (that is from Zalpa located at the Black Sea) to the king at Hattuša. Besides Zalpa also Kaniš is an important royal centre and Anitta emphasizes his connection with the sun-god Šiu. At least since the Old Hittite period these traditions intertwine but I think that Haas is not absolutely right when he accentuates that from then onwards the weather-god (of heaven) was the main source of royal authority. Judging from pictures of the king wearing the dress of and showing iconographic features of the sun-god but also from textual evidence according to which the sun-god and the king operate in a similar way one has to conclude that the sun-god is at least as important for the king's authority as the weather-god during the entire Hittite history.⁶ Maybe this is some hidden inheritance from the "Hittite" sun-god Šiu. With the act of the enthronement the king is not only initiated into kingship but he also becomes the sacred ruler of the country and the highest priest for the official religious ceremonies. There are some indications that this act took place within the New Year's festival and from that moment onwards everything the king was doing he did for the welfare and blessing of the country. It must be seen from this point of view that nearly all the Hittite ritual texts at our disposal focus on the king

and the queen: The texts, e.g., deal with means to restore their ritual purity, to maintain their strength or remove sickness, or to appease the gods' anger at the royal family.

The king also has to serve as the main priest in the festivals of the state cult some of them lasting for more than one month. The Hattian *purulliya*-festival (p. 696-747) originated from the cult centre at Nerik and may reach back to pre-Hittite times. It was celebrated at the beginning of the New Year in autumn and its main purpose was to strengthen the growth of nature and the vitality and charisma of the royal couple, but also to renovate the palace thus symbolically renewing kingship. Maybe this long festival—we already have an Old Hittite text mentioning that the whole festival was laid down on a series consisting of 32 tablets—was not celebrated annually but only every seventh or ninth year. Due to political pressure from the Kaskaean from Northern Anatolia during the Middle Hittite period it became difficult (or even impossible) to celebrate the festival at Nerik which led to changes of the festival. It got shortened, some parts of it could be passed over or were to be held at other centres. Another important festival, the AN.TAH.ŠUM-festival (p. 772-826), was celebrated in spring. Probably Suppiluliuma I. united several local spring festivals to one long festival which was held—under the patronage of the ruler—at different places which the king subsequently visited in the course of the festival days which also took a period of more than one month. Thus the king could integrate local interests and hopes in the king as a guaranty for the land's welfare in the state cult. As a spring festival—its name is derived from the plant AN.TAH.ŠUM, some kind of crocus or fennel—it certainly had to bestow prosperity of plants to the country but it was mainly celebrated for “the gods and goddesses of Hatti and the sun-goddess of Arinna” (cf. KUB XIX 22, 1-2). The *nuntarriyašha*-festival (p. 827-847) in autumn lasted—in its elaborated form—about fifty days. As in the case with the AN.TAH.ŠUM-festival this festival also seems to date at least to the time of Suppiluliuma I., who united and incorporated local autumn festivals into one ritual. Later on Muršili II., Hattušili III. and Tudhaliya IV. have added other subfestivals to the rituals and have introduced some new rites. Comparable to the AN.TAH.ŠUM-festival we again see that the king celebrates parts of the festival at different places which he visits subsequently. One central theme of the festival is harvesting because the sun-goddess of Arinna is offered “new” fruits, young wine and fresh honey by the queen.

These three festivals⁷ are connected with the seasons and the year which began originally in autumn. Haas shows that these three festivals had undergone some substantial changes which mainly concern the *purulliya*- and the AN.TAH.ŠUM-festival. The aforementioned necessity to change the *purulliya*-festival due to political and military troubles from the Kaskaean led to a decline of this festival. When Muršili II. put off the new year to spring according to the Babylonian calendar (p. 693) the AN.TAH.ŠUM-festival could serve as a New Year's festival thus replacing the older Hittian festival to a large degree. It is obvious that the rites of the 11th day of the AN.TAH.ŠUM, when the "old year" is set to rest in the temple of the dead, had their original setting within the New Year's celebration of the *purulliya*-festival and were only transferred to the spring festival of AN.TAH.ŠUM after the latter had become the New Year's festival which now was the main and annually held event. But also the *nuntarriyašha*-festival in autumn gained importance from the decline of the *purulliya*. After this had been transferred to spring, the *nuntarriyašha* was the only big autumn-festival which got more and more elaborated and adapted to the AN.TAH.ŠUM-celebrations in spring. Both festivals had the cultic journeys of the king to nearly the same cultic centres in common, the rites held from the 9th to the 11th day of the autumn festival were nearly the same as those held from the 12th to the 14th day of the festival in spring. Bearing in mind such similarities we can reach the following conclusion about Hittite festivals: They serve the state cult and political interests.⁸ Therefore it is interesting to note that the main participants of these festivals are—besides the royal family—the public officials, the representatives of the important cities of the Hittite empire and also the "foreigners" that is the international diplomatic corps being present at Hattuša. We have no information that commoners had to fulfil any important function during the festivals though it can be held for certain that they took part in them. But on a sociological level these festivals represent first of all the well organized Hittite state with the king on the hierarchical top. It is this background which can explain that Hittite festivals—described in official ritual "handbooks" which have also been copied and sent to the provincial towns to guarantee the exact performance of the rituals—lack nearly any kind of spontaneity or individuality. They are ceremonies to be carried out mirroring hierarchy: the king surrounded by his family at the inner circle and by high diplomats and officials at the outer circle. The farther away from the king the lower the status of the participant and the less important (or de facto unnecessary) was his presence.

3. "Private" Religion in Common Life

Hittite ritual (and mythological) texts focus on official religion and official cults but reading them carefully it is possible to some degree to sketch the meaning of religion for common people, too. Although we cannot describe every religious practice of these people because relevant sources are missing some aspects can be deduced from the official texts. In ancient societies man is maybe more deeply involved in religion from his birth to the grave than in modern societies. So we can first mention birth rituals which often show the divine help for mother and child. Goddesses who are requested to give help on such an occasion are at first rate Kamrušepa and Hannahanna, but also the moon-god Arma⁹ shows close connections to conception, pregnancy and birth. Although these ritual texts are at first hand concerned with births within the royal family we may argue that similar (maybe in some way shortened) rituals are performed usually at births in many households. As Ch. Zinko¹⁰ has shown recently there are some comparable traits in Hittite and old Indian birth rituals; the latter are part of the domestic rituals which should be carried out also by commoners. On the basis of such phenomenological coincidences we may assume that religious life began at the moment of birth; so Kantuzili correctly states in his well-known prayer:¹¹ "O my god, since my mother gave birth to me, you, my god, have reared me."

Daily life has its centre in the house and some important information regarding religion is presented by Haas under the heading "Hauskulte" (p. 249-293). The house is a microcosmos and private religion has always been closely connected with the domestic sphere. Therefore the building of a new house is accompanied by rituals and the last action is the setting of the hearth as the religious core of this new house. Women have to care for the fire of the hearth as symbol of the living family. When the fire is extinguished the family will die or face misfortune at least. So in mythological texts we are told that smoke seized the house and stifled the fire as a portentous sign. Therefore the whole family gathers around the hearth, offerings are given to it and the numen of the hearth is expected to provide vitality, virility and prospering to the household. It is a pity that we do not know if such rituals to the hearth have been performed regularly or only occasionally. The aforementioned Kamrušepa, whose cultic centre has been the early Hittite settlement at Kaniš and who has been identified with the Hattian goddess Katahziwuri already in the Old Kingdom,

has also a close affiliation to the fire of the hearth; a ritual text illustrates this aspect when she is the goddess who can bring the lost heat of the fire back. This corresponds with other rites within the family and the household, so that she is invoked to purify the house, the hearth, but also the domestic animals. With the Hurrian influence Šaušga takes the position of a goddess giving shelter to the family and the private¹² household like Kamrušepa and Hannahanna. Other numina of the household have—to a lesser degree—a comparable importance in daily religion, e.g., the spirits of the door, the door-bolt, the window or the central pillar of the house. These are places in the house from where danger for the house and the family can emerge and it is necessary to keep their spirits in good mood. The central pillar of the house is closely related to the main seat of the male head of the family; therefore these spirits of the house are venerated by the male members of the family. Within the family never could all the gods of the official pantheon be worshipped. We know that in the palace at Hattuša a special temple was dedicated to the private gods of the royal family and Muwatalli II. venerates the gods and goddesses of his grandmother and grandfather; from other Hittite kings we know that they have chosen one god as their special tutelary deity, e.g., Muwatalli II. the Luwian weather-god *pihaššašši*, Hattušili III. the Hurrian goddess Šaušga or Tudhaliya IV. Šarruma. We may assume that such a personal preference for certain gods did not only occur at the royal court but was also a common practice.

The *pater familias* has to care for the cult of the deceased ancestors (p. 216-248). The official cult of the (royal) dead in Anatolia can be compared with similar practices in Ebla, Alalah, Ugarit or other centres in Syria. The ancestors are regarded as divine; when the king dies, Hittite texts say “the king becomes a god” (*šiu-kišari*). In a similar way the dead in Syrian Ugarit can be said to be “gods” (*ilm*). Thus I think that Haas (p. 243) is not right in postulating that the dead Hittite king is united with the old Indo-European god of heaven Šiu. The “divinity” of the dead ancestors is an expression that they possess another status than the living so that they can provide—like the gods—blessings and welfare for the family when they are venerated in a proper way. That the dead are still considered as part of the family can be deduced from the designation of the day of the dead as the “day of (the father and) the mother”. Also worth mentioning is a

passage from a ritual for the dead when the priest asked where the dead person has gone to; he gets the following answer: “The mother [approached] him and took his hand” (KUB XXX 28 rev. 11sq). The dead one will be recollected by his own (deceased) ancestors so that these family bonds never are broken entirely. Also the type of name giving suggests this interpretation as we can observe that grandfather and grandson are bearing the same name. It is the obligation of the living head of the family, the *pater familias*, to uphold the family ties by providing the cult of the dead in his house. The Hittite text series *šalliš waštaiš* for the dead king provides evidence of rituals concerning the dead which last as long as fourteen days. But there are some other fragmentary texts¹³ with similar rituals which are not performed for the king but—obviously—for a commoner. It is interesting that one of these rituals lasts for only seven days. Another interesting feature of one of these texts shows the necessity that the husband has to care for bread and beer for his wife who has died from the “Išhara-disease”. Thus we have to conclude that it was possible (and necessary) to perform (perhaps less complicated) rituals for dead commoners as part of “private” religion.

“Magic” according to Hittite texts is a system of polarities like impure-pure, sick-healthy or bound-unbound. A person who is effected in this negative way can be treated with incantations to get well again. Both (white) “magic” which aims to (re)create integrity and (black) “magic” which creates disorder are connected with the cosmic order and the gods. A good number of Hittite (and Hurrian) ritual texts can be characterized as either incantations or rituals for white magic (cf. p. 876-911) which shows its importance for Hittite society. There is no doubt that magic was fully acknowledged among the Hittites as a substantial part of official and private life, as we have already seen, e.g., in connection with the birth rituals. Any kind of mischief—sickness, sudden death, quarrel between husband and wife, crop failure or famine—results from black magic so that one has to counteract. Magic is conceived as a technique which can be taught and learned and gods are the first authorities who know how to handle magic. Mainly goddesses like Kamrušepa, Hannahanna or Šaušga are concerned with it which fosters the belief that women are chief experts¹⁴ in magic in a negative or positive way. Lengthy purification or incantation rituals can be carried out on behalf of the king but sometimes we also find in such texts the note that when the ritual is carried out on behalf of a poor man then it is shortened and

less materials are used or less fruits and aromata are offered to the gods (cf. p. 888). This is interesting because we learn from it that magic rituals had just the same meaning for the official state cult and for the private religious well-being. Such (simplified) rituals thus obviously formed a very important aspect in everyday religion. When one was in need because of mischief one could ask a ritual practitioner to intervene with his technique to appease the gods, to remove misfortune and to bring oneself in harmony with the cosmic order.

One aspect of religion that is treated only marginally in the study by Haas is the question of ethics and sin.¹⁵ Different texts lay an emphasis on the pessimistic fact that mankind is sinful and therefore the sin of the father is passed over to the son, as a famous statement given by Muršili II. in his so-called second plague prayer says. But also other kinds of mischief—e.g., the drying up and spoiling of crops, the breaking of a birth-stool—occasion because of someone's sin. Thus man has always to search his heart if he has done something wrong that displeases the gods. A text from the end of the 15th century, the prayer of Kantuzili, lists some possibilities of sins and Kantuzili is not aware of having sinned in any way. But he is suffering from sickness and therefore he must have committed some unknown sin which is the reason for his bad situation. He prays to his god:¹⁶ "Even when I fared well, I always acknowledged the superior power (and) the wisdom of my god. Never have I sworn in thy name, my god, and then broken the oath afterward. That which is holy to my god and hence not fit for me to eat, never have I eaten it. I have not brought impurity upon my body. Never have I withheld from thy stable an ox; never have I withheld from thy fold a sheep. Whenever I came upon food, I never ate it indiscriminately; whenever I came upon water, I never drank it indiscriminately. Were I now to recover, would I not have recovered at the word of thee, my god?" Other kinds of sin—e.g., theft, murder, neglecting help for the other or disregarding divine commands or festivals for the gods—cause the anger of the gods and man has to ask for pity. Repentance and atonement will reconcile man and his god(s), but material reparation can also be necessary. A man who knows his sinful behaviour and makes it good, also does a favor to Hittite society. Thus religion and ethics have not only a spiritual, but also an inner-wordly effect.

4. Conclusion

Exhaustive articles or books on Hittite Religion in dictionaries or handbooks of the History of Religions are rare. Therefore one gratefully acknowledges the new book on Hittite religion by Haas which will serve as an important reference tool to religion in Hittite Anatolia. The prime concern of Haas has been to present all the relevant source materials rather systematically (cf. p. xiii-xiv) thus paving the way to further research on religious phenomena and practices in Anatolia. Thus his “History of Hittite Religion” is rather a starting point¹⁷ than the end of our research for the “meaning” of religion in Hittite Anatolia—not only as an upper class and main stream system, but also in its every day setting. I am aware that due to our disposable sources it will remain impossible to learn everything about Hittite religion but I think some conclusions are noteworthy.

Haas has described the syncretistic religion of the Hittites with its importance for the society and the maintenance of royal power. Although the author has in view a chronological setting of his sources and the development of traditions I think it is still a task for the future to research the “history” of religion in Hittite Anatolia spanning at least half a millenium. The Old Hittite period, the important turning point of religious thoughts in Middle Hittite times and the official religion and cults of the New Hittite kingdom deserve a treatment of their own¹⁸—depending on philological research concerning the age and the time of origin of our written sources which still has to be done. Then we will learn more about changing ideas. The same can be said about ethnic diversities of Anatolia which also are reflected in different cults. Without doubt Haas has put his emphasis on this factor and has analyzed them. Being excellently acquainted with the Hurrian culture this important aspect of “Hittite” religion has been given all the necessary attention. Taking together such diachronic and ethnic traits one will have to ask, e.g., in further research: Did Hurrian concepts have an impact on Hittite common people in the capital during the 13th century or did these concepts only have an impact for the state religion? How long did the Hattian stock of population in central Anatolia follow their religion and when or how got these religious concepts changed? Could the priests (or somebody else) effectively propagate religious traditions favored at the royal court among the different social classes? Giving answers to such question is not easy. I think we will have to look first at the materials assembled by Haas mainly in chapters like “Hauskulte” or “lokale

Kulte” but also in the rich materials on the gods and goddesses. Further I think we can take the scarce informations on religion in central and southern Anatolia after the fall of the Hittite empire and before the conquest by the Assyrians as a test: Hieroglyphic-Luwian and Lycian inscriptions and archaeological remains from these periods can show us which aspects of “Hittite” religion lived further on.¹⁹ Taking this together we will be able to sketch a diversified picture of religion(s) in Hittite Anatolia—regarding its/their diachronic setting, its/their official range, its/their place in everyday life, and—maybe—its/their function as a common bond for “Hittite” culture.

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¹ V. Haas, *Geschichte der hethitischen Religion*, Leiden: E.J. Brill 1994 (= Handbuch der Orientalistik, 1. Abt., 15. Bd.), xxi+1031 p., 137 plates. ISBN-90-04-09799-6. US\$ 263.00.

² For problems of a seasonal pattern for the interpretation of the Baal cycle cf. M.S. Smith, *The Ugaritic Baal Cycle. Vol. 1. Introduction with Text, Translation and Commentary*, Leiden 1994, 63-69.

³ The study by E. Masson, *Le combat pour l'immortalité. Héritage indo-européen dans la mythologie anatolienne*, Paris 1991 is missing in the exhaustive bibliography compiled by Haas. But Masson's study is giving too much credit to Indo-European influence on Hittite religion, cf. my review of Masson's book in *BiOr* 50 (1993) 194-199.

⁴ Cf. also G. McMahon, *The Hittite State Cult of the Tutelary Deities*, Chicago 1991, 211-215.

⁵ Cf. now I. Singer, “The Thousand Gods of Hatti’: The Limits of an Expanding Pantheon”, in: *Israel Oriental Studies* 14 (1994) 81-102.

⁶ Cf. Ph. Houwink ten Cate, “The Sun God of Heaven, the Assembly of Gods and the Hittite King”, in: D. van der Plas (ed.), *Effigies Dei. Essays on the History of Religions*, Leiden 1987 (Supplements to Numen 51), 13-34. The interesting article is to be added at p. 996 to the bibliography by Haas.

⁷ There are a lot of other (smaller) festivals to be held for (locals) gods or in connection with the agriculturally important seasons. Detailed analyses have been given by Haas for the KI.LAM- (p. 748-771) and the *hišuwā*-festival (p. 848-875). The latter is a further excellent example how festivals are closely related to

Hittite politics: Puduhepa, the wife of Hattušili III. and the daughter of a priest from Kizzuwatna, entrusts Walwaziti to search for festivals from Kizzuwatna and to compile from these festivals a new ritual lasting for 9 days—the *hišuwa*-festival. Thus we can say that this festival is a foundation by Puduhepa to the weather-god on behalf of her husband's (and the state's) welfare.

⁸ Cf. Haas, p. 680: “[Festrituale] vermitteln . . . den Eindruck eines straff organisierten, umfassenden Staatswesens, das allein der König repräsentiert. Hierfür sprechen die stark ausgeprägte Ritualisierung des kultischen Vollzugs, die starre Einhaltung der Zeremonien, das fast völlige Fehlen ekstatischer Momente und . . . jeglicher Art von Spontanität und Individualität der Festgemeinde.”

⁹ The verb *armahh-* “to become pregnant” is deduced from the name of this god, cf. Haas, p. 273.

¹⁰ Ch. Zinko, “Hethitische und vedische Geburtsrituale im sprach- und kulturgeschichtlichen Vergleich—ein Arbeitsbericht”, in: *SIMA* 1 (1994) 119-148; Ch. Zinko, “Hethitische Geburtsrituale im Vergleich mit altindischen Ritualen”, in: O. Carruba/M. Giogieri/C. Mora (eds.), *Atti del II congresso internazionale di Hittitologia*, Pavia 1995, 389-400 (= *Studia Mediterranea* 9).

¹¹ KUB XXX 10 obv. 6; cf. G. Beckman, *Hittite Birth Rituals*, Wiesbaden 1983, 11.

¹² To care for the royal household is the task of Hebat, cf. Haas, p. 260.

¹³ The texts have been studied by H. Otten, *Hethitische Totenrituale*, Berlin 1958, 98-103.

¹⁴ I think that Haas' statement cannot be upheld even if he gives a reference to M. Mauss (p. 882 with note 43): “Die magische Autorität der Frau beruht auf . . . ihrer Eigenschaft zur Hysterie, so daß ihre nervösen Krisen sie übernatürlichen Kräften auszuliefern scheinen.”

¹⁵ Detailed references for the following short notes are given in M. Hutter, “Sündenbewußtsein als Spiegel ethischer Werte im hethitischen Kleinasien,” in: H. Bürkle (ed.), *Grundwerte menschlichen Verhaltens in den Religionen*, Frankfurt 1993, 9-17.

¹⁶ Cited after A. Goetze, “Hittite Prayers,” in: J.B. Pritchard (ed.), *Ancient Near Eastern Texts Relating to the Old Testament*, Princeton 1969, 393-401, 400.

¹⁷ Cf. also the review of the book by M. Popko in *OLZ* 90 (1995) 469-483 which was published just when I finished this article.

¹⁸ I only partially agree with Haas, p. 699: “Der Versuch, getrennte—alt-, mittel- und junghethitische— Fassungen zu rekonstruieren, würde schon daran scheitern, daß junghethitischen Ritualtafeln zumeist ältere Vorlagen zugrundeliegen.” What Haas says here concerning the *purulliya*-festival is also valid for other rituals. But for a “history” we have to try to reconstruct even if we cannot reach satisfactory results in any case.

¹⁹ Cf. M. Hutter, "Das Ineinanderfließen von luwischen und aramäischen religiösen Vorstellungen in Nordsyrien," in: P.W. Haider/M. Hutter/S. Kreuzer (eds.), *Religionsgeschichte Syriens von der Frühzeit bis zur Gegenwart*, Stuttgart 1996, 116-122; M.N. van Loon, *Anatolia in the Earlier First Millenium B.C.*, Leiden 1991 (= *Iconography of Religions* XV/13).