

# 'Dead of Night' in Anatolia: Hittite Night Rituals

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## Abstract

This article investigates Hittite night rituals. Its main aim is to try to determine the reason(s) why rituals might take place during the night. In other words, it tries to define the 'magical' power of the night according to the point of view of the ancient Anatolians.

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## *In Memory of Erica Reiner*

In her article dating from 1965, E. Reiner suggested that, in the Assyro-Babylonian world, night was regarded as a particularly propitious moment for performing rituals, mainly because of its silence. Supposedly, it also was the preferred moment for demons to enter the human realm (Reiner 1965). Later on, E. Reiner also studied the magical power of stars in the Babylonian culture (Reiner 1995).

For the purpose of this article, I will try to determine the nature and, if possible, the *Sitz im Leben* of the ritual acts that are performed during the night, focusing on the Hittite evidence.<sup>1</sup> The corpus I have assembled here on the basis of some key words (such as *išpant-/GE<sub>6</sub>* 'night', *nekuz mehur* 'the evening, at nightfall', or *mahhan MUL watkuzzi* 'when a star twinkles'<sup>2</sup>) is not supposed to be exhaustive. Nevertheless, it is a representative sample of the Hittite data on this question. The principal ritual actions performed during the night are: (i) sacrifices, (ii) purification or consecration rituals, and (iii) conjuration or invocation rituals. I will try to determine how and when these actions occur in the ritual process.

In his synthesis on Hittite religion, V. Haas has already insisted that the moment of the ritual is an important factor.<sup>3</sup> A similar observation has been made by D. H. Engelhard, who examined some of the nocturnal rituals in his doctoral dissertation on Hittite magic (Engelhard 1970, pp. 202–10).

## 1. *Sacrifices*

Many sacrifices are performed at night. Several categories can be distinguished: (i) animal sacrifices, (ii) some food sacrifices, and (iii) *šehelliški*-sacrifices. Furthermore, whenever it is possible to do so, we will try to

determine the circumstances during which these sacrifices take place as well as the identity of their recipients.

### 1.1. ANIMAL SACRIFICES

In a religious festival performed in honor of a deity called Tetešhapi, the link between the moment of the sacrifice and the identity of the divine recipients is quite clear: ‘When it is night-time, one gives a male goat to the Sibitti [and to] Telipinu’ (KBo 45.129 i 6’–8’: Alp 1983, p. 316). As generally accepted, the Sibitti are to be identified with the Pleiades constellation; thus giving them an offering during the night seems appropriate.<sup>4</sup> However, the association between these deities and the Hattian<sup>5</sup> agrarian god Telipinu during this nocturnal sacrifice is somewhat more difficult to explain.

A similar observation can be made about a passage of another religious festival: ‘When it is night-time, the priest of the storm god sacrifices a [male goat] for the divine KASKAL.KUR with beer. § He sacrifices a male goat for Hepat. Then one burns them in front of [KASKAL].KUR itself. § One takes ashes and throws them away; but the place where one throws them away is not important’ (KUB 25.44 ii 25’–32’: Wegner 2002, p. 165). According to E. I. Gordon (1967–1969), the sumerogram KASKAL.KUR designates a subterranean watercourse. J. D. Hawkins proposed that this denomination designated a cultic monumental structure. According to him, the latter would represent an artificial passageway to the netherworld (Hawkins 1995, pp. 44–5). Even if this interpretation was confirmed, this element is not particularly helpful for understanding the link that seems to exist in our text between the divine KASKAL.KUR and the night. Perhaps should we imagine that there exists a relationship between the chthonic deities and the night. We will return to this possibility later. Besides, the association between KASKAL.KUR and Hepat is as surprising as the one already noticed between the Sibitti and Telipinu. A peculiarity should be noticed, however. KUB 25.44 seems to mention two different types of animal sacrifices: the first one, addressed to Hepat, could be a sacrifice by throat slitting whereas the second one is clearly an example of incineration.

A passage of the AN.TAH.ŠUM festival states: ‘At nightfall, [one performs] a sacrifice (as a) *kulumurši*’ (KBo 10.20 iii 33). According to V. Haas, the expiatory sacrifice *kulu/amurši*- would take place only during the night (Haas 1994, p. 691). But he does not give a clear argument in favor of this hypothesis. Moreover, the few passages in Hittite language that mention this Hurrian religious term do not make any clear allusion to the moment of ritual.<sup>6</sup>

A night sacrifice also takes place during the exorcistic ritual of Ašhella, supposed to cure a troop from an epidemic. The text mentions the following: ‘When on (that) day it is night-time, whoever the chiefs of the army are, each (of them) prepares a ram. (These) rams, may they (be) white or may they (be) dark, it is not important. I place a string of white wool, (one) of red wool (and one) of green/yellow wool and I weave them together. I assemble

an iron necklace (made of) lead (with) beads. § I hang it on the neck and the thorn of the rams. At night, one binds them (= the rams) in front of the tents and one speaks thus: "(You) the deity that turn yourself (in a malevolent way towards the army), (you) the deity who has provoked this epidemic, I have bound these rams for you. Calm down", (KUB 9.32 and duplicates i 4–14: Dinçol 1985, pp. 12–3)! The choice of the night as the moment for the offering may be explained by the greater proximity, during the night, of the deities and the spirits. However, I do not believe that this passage necessarily mentions chthonian spirits as D. H. Engelhard suggested (Engelhard 1970, p. 205). The present article shows that any 'category' of deities can be contacted during the night.

A last example is a Kizzuwatnian<sup>7</sup> birth ritual during which an animal sacrifice preceding a bread offering takes place during the night: 'One gives to eat to the *patili*-priests and to the *katra*-women. (Then) they leave. When it is night-time (and) a star twinkles, the *patili*-priest goes in and makes an opening (of the chamber) in front of the birth-stool. § He leads the woman inside. She bows down in front of the birth-stool. [The]n, she holds out her hand. From the inner chamber she comes forth and the *patili*-priest makes a sealing before (the entrance) of the inner chamber. § The woman sits down on . . . (Beckman 1983, pp. 94–5 restores <sup>GIŠ</sup>N[<sup>Á</sup>HÁ-a]š "the bed"). He places a wickerwork table near her [hea]d. [T]hen he places a *nahiti*-loaf on it. On the *nahiti*-loaf the moon god, the sun god [and] a star (are) made. § As the *patili*-priest had placed on the *ipulliya* (of) the woman cedar, tamarisk (and) olive woods (that had been) bound up with red wool, he takes them away from her and he places them on the *nahiti*-loaf. § The *patili*-priest gives to the woman a jug of wine. And him, he hands over to her two young goats. The woman sacrifices them with wine and the *patili*-priest drives them away. § When he arrives at the crossing of the road, he sacrifices a young goat for the male deities of the *šinapši*-temple, and he sacrifices the (second) young goat for the male deities of the city. § The *patili*-priest comes back. He bows down before the inner chamber and he bows down (before) the woman. He cries: "Health!" One gives [to him] to drink [and] he leaves' (KUB 9.22 ii 44–iii 28: Beckman 1983, pp. 92–5). The divine recipient of the bread offering is not named, whereas the recipients of the animal sacrifice are: they are the masculine gods of *šinapši*-temple and of the city. Beside the moment of this animal sacrifice ['when it is night-time (and that) a star twinkles'], the place of the offering, namely, 'the crossing of the road', is also noticeable. The crossing of the road clearly is one of the passageway between the divine world and the human sphere (Mouton forthcoming; See also CHD P, 72 sub *palša*- 1 e 6').

## 1.2. SOME FOOD SACRIFICES

Beside animal sacrifices, night is also a moment during which one can provide vegetarian offerings to the gods. Beside libations of wine, beer or oil that

accompany most of the time the solid food offerings, one notices bread offerings. Some of them are actually associated with an animal sacrifice, as we noticed already. Several texts cited by A. M. Polvani (2005, with bibliography) illustrate that the astral deities Sibitti receive different kinds of food offerings during the night, this moment being the most appropriate one to 'reach' them. A religious festival can be seen as an example of this phenomenon: 'One places lamps. One gives a jug of wine to the musicians and one keeps active through the night. One brings ordinary bread, bread (made of) fat (and) *memal* to the Sibitti' (KUB 58.39 i 10'-13': Polvani 2005, pp. 183-4).

In a sequence of the royal funerary ritual *šalliš waštaiš*, one can read: 'When they pass the night sleepless, they give exactly the same offerings [= bread offerings] and pour fine oil down to the hearth. They finish (the ritual sequence this way)' (KUB 30.21+ iii 53-55 and its duplicate KUB 39.8+ iii 14"-17": Kassian/Korolëv/Sidel'tsev 2002, pp. 570-1). In this passage, the sacrifice that is performed during the night follows the same model as the ones during the day. It is thus a simple continuation of the same process. The same text mentions further on: 'When, at night, only one *wakšur*-measure (of fine oil) remains, one brings a *lelhuntalli*-vessel and one places it on the hearth, before the effigy. One pours down (the liquid contained in the *lelhuntalli*-vessel). One makes *harašpawant*-loaves and sweet bread and one places them before the effigy' (KUB 30.21+ iv 10'-13' and duplicates KUB 39.8+ iv 9-13 and KBo 39.290: 1'-10': Kassian/Korolëv/Sidel'tsev 2002, pp. 590-1). Unlike the preceding passage, this part of the *šalliš waštaiš* ritual specifies the identity of the recipient of the offering: it probably is the royal dead spirit that is embodied in his effigy (concerning the effigy of the royal dead spirit, see van den Hout 1994, pp. 63-5).

A passage of a catalog tablet mentions a religious festival in honor of Inar: 'A long tablet: if at night a musician breaks loaves of ordinary bread in the temple of Inar, he makes the following recitation in Hattian. Finished' (KUB 30.42 iv 8'-10': Dardano 2006, pp. 28-9). Considering the location of the bread offering, it is clear that its recipient is Inar – unless it is one of the gods 'housed' in the same temple.

In the so-called 'ritual of the river' of Tunnawi(ya), we read: 'When she has arranged all this, the Old Woman at nightfall takes two loaves of flat bread, one jug of wine, bread (made of) fat (and) *memal* and she goes to the river bank to announce it to the mother goddess of the river bank. § When she arrives at the river bank, she breaks one loaf of flat bread (for) the mother goddess of the river bank. She places it upon the river bank and she scatters bread (made of fat) and *memal* on it. She pours a libation of wine and speaks (thus): § "Mother goddess of the river bank, I have just come back to you. You, mother goddess of the river bank from which this clay (has been) taken, take (it) in your hand, rub this patient with it and cleanse his twelve limbs!" Then, she takes clay of the river bank and she goes to the source (of the river). She breaks the (second) loaf of flat bread

and she places it in the clay of the source. She scatters bread (made of fat and *memal*, she pours a libation of wine and she speaks (thus): "As you, the source, you are gushing up mud from the dark earth, just so remove from the limbs of this person, the patient, evil impurity!" Then, she takes clay of the source. While the Old Woman is taking these (things), a reed hut<sup>8</sup> (has) already (been) made in front of the river. The place where one makes (it), (namely) where there is no ploughed field nearby, (where) the plough (is) not present, at that place the hut (is) made.<sup>9</sup> § The [*Old Woma*]n brings there the clay of the river bank and also the clay of the source. [Two clay figurines] (and) twelve clay tongues (are) *halupant-*. Two clay oxes, two clay door-hinges, a small quantity of [blue wool], a small quantity of red wool. A string and red wool (are) [twiste]d in. An eagle's wing, a small quantity of bone, a small quantity of *alli-*, a seed of . . . , a small quantity of figs, [a small quantity of] *zimakki-*, a small quantity of [heart], a small quantity of liver, a piglet (made) of dough, crumbs of *wakkišar* bread, crumbs of leavened [bread], crumbs of bread (made of) cucumber, one wax figurine, [one f]igurine (made of) sheep fat, (these things are) wrapped with fat. She arranges all these (things) in a basket. § A pregnant cow; but if (it is) a man she prepares a bull' (KUB 7.53+ i 24–51: Goetze 1938, pp. 6–9). The food offerings (bread, wine, bread made of fat and *memal*) destined for the mother goddess of the river bank and for the source are accompanied by incantations in which the Old Woman directly speaks to the deities concerned by the sacrifice. One interpretation that comes to mind is that silence, which is a typical feature of the night, is propitious for transmitting the patient's prayers to the deities. Beside this, one should notice that the bread offering is connected with a preliminary phase necessary for the pending purification rite. We could say that the food offerings given to the two deities are meant to 'transform' the clay that has been taken. This clay, when it will be rubbed on the patient's body, will perform the purification, according to the incantations themselves. Whatever exactly happens, the *materia magica* of the ritual is prepared during the night, and it is a phenomenon that we will observe in another ritual text below.

### 1.3. ŠHELLIŠKI-SACRIFICES

In the context of Kizzuwatnian rituals, night seems propitious to the offering of a cultic object called *šelliški-*. M.-C. Trémouille (1996; see also more recently Strauss 2006, pp. 98–101) has demonstrated that the *šelliški-* is a kind of vessel generally containing water that has been consecrated by being exposed to the night. This consecrated water is thereafter able to purify persons and divine effigies that need to be treated (see Section 2.1.).

A ritual states the following: 'At nightfall, the night of that same day, one gives a *šelliški-* in the temple of the storm god, in the temple of Hepat and in the *šinapši*-temple. One gives a *šelliški-* in the temple of the storm god, in the *hamri*-temple to Hepat *hurtišši* and to Hepat *hāriya*. If there is

a *šehelliški-* (left) for Hilaššiti, one gives (it) to (this deity). But if there is [not] (such vessel), one does not give it to (the deity). / § The day after, (namely) during the twenty-third day, one *encircles* the temple of the storm god, Hepat and all the temples with an eagle, a hawk, a *hapupa*-bird, a “bird of the hole” and a *hušta*-mineral. One consecrates them with Water of Purity’ (KUB 30.31 iv 20–26; 36–40: Trémouille 1996, pp. 90–1). The recipients of this *šehelliški-* sacrifice are the storm god, Hepat, the deities of the *šinapši*-temple (concerning these deities, see Gentili Pieri 1982 and Mouton, forthcoming) and Hilaššiti. The night offering of *šehelliški-* seems to be an essential prelude to the consecration rite by Water of Purity that takes place the day after in the morning.

In another ritual, it is written: ‘One gives [one] offering as *uzzi*-<sup>10</sup> with a lamb. Then, if a *šehelliški-* is to be given to this deity, one gives (him) the *šehelliški-* at nightfall. The third day (is) finished’ (KBo 24.45 Ro 26’–27’: Strauss 2006, pp. 314, 320). According to another passage of the same text, it seems that the identity of the deity to whom the *šehelliški-* is offered is unimportant. The passage states: ‘If (it is) a male deity, it is unsuitable for a woman to enter (his temple)’ (Ro 20’: Strauss 2006, pp. 314, 320). Therefore, the choice of offering the *šehelliški-* during the night has no relationship with the identity of the divine recipient of this sacrifice.

The Kizzuwatnian ritual of Papānikri meant to prepare parturition described in indicates the following: ‘At nightfall, she gives two *šehelliški*-concerning the *šinapši*-temple’. (KBo 5.1 i 48–49: Strauss 2006, pp. 288, 297). The precise meaning of this sentence is unclear. The simplest and therefore most reasonable interpretation would be to say that, as the *šinapši*-temple may be the place where purification rituals are performed, offering *šehelliški*-vessels containing Water of Purity is one of the possible ways to propitiate the gods of this sanctuary. It seems that in our text, the *šehelliški*-offering is an important preliminary to the sacrifices performed afterward in the *šinapši*-temple (KBo 5.1 ii 1–3: Strauss 2006, 289, 297).

The ritual of Ammihatna, Tulpi and Mati states: ‘The second day, one gives offerings as *uzzi-* and *zurki-*, and at night, one gives a *šehelliški-* offering. § The day after, by day-time, she/he leaves and one takes Water of Purity. / § Then one consecrates the deity with Water of Purity. § One sprinkles (it) on the temple’ (KBo 23.1 and duplicates i 56–59; ii 4–6: Strauss 2006, pp. 262, 267–8). This passage clearly illustrates the link that exists between the *šehelliški*-vessel and the Water of Purity, mentioned at the beginning of this paragraph.

## 2. Purification or Consecration Rituals

### 2.1. PURIFICATION/CONSECRATION WITH WATER OF PURITY

Beside the examples studied in Section 1.3., other texts related to the Kizzuwatnian sphere mention the purifying and even consecrating power

of the water contained in the *šehelliški*-vessel. Concerning the ritual procedure from which results the consecration of the Water of Purity, see below (Section 2.2.1.)

A foundation ritual of a temple for the goddess of the night has been recently restudied by J. L. Miller. Here is a passage from it: 'On the morrow of the third day, at dawn, the ritual patron goes quickly to the temple. (And) while the stars are still there, one brings the Water of Purity down from the roof. The ritual patron goes before the deity and he bows down in front of the deity. He stands behind the ritual of attracting (the deity) upwards and the priest attracts the deity for the *āpi*-pit seven times. The ritual patron (also) attracts (the deity) seven times. § Then, one goes from the temple to the storehouse. One performs a *dupšahi*-offering/ritual in the storehouse. One takes a loaf of *mūlati*-bread for the *dupšahi*-offering/ritual but the *mūlati*-bread loaf that is left over, one takes it for the *dupšahi*- and the *šarlatti*-offerings/rituals. The ritual patron goes wherever he wants to. When, during that day, at nightfall, a star twinkles, the ritual patron goes to the ancient temple but he does not bow down before the deity. He places an offering as *zurki*-. One gives an offering as *zurki*- with fish and one sacrifices a young goat or a lamb. The ritual patron *arnami*-s and he stands up. § He stands behind the *šarlatti*-offering/ritual. One performs a *šarlatti*-offering/ritual with a sheep. Then one treats the ritual patron as well as the deity with silver and *gangati*-plant. Then one burns a lamb as *ambašši*-. The ritual patron bows down and he goes home. [ . . . ] When, on the fourth day, a star twinkles, the ritual patron enters the temple and he stands behind Pirinkir. One perform a *keldi*-offering/ritual for Pirinkir and when one is finished, one brings the deity down from the roof, one scatters bread crumbs and fruits to him and one brings him to the temple. [ . . . ] When, during the second day, at nightfall, a star twinkles, the ritual patron goes to the temple. He bows down before the deity. The two knives which have been made for the new deity, one takes them. One digs an *āpi*-pit before the table of the deity. One sacrifices a sheep to the deity as *enumašši*-. One slaughters [it] down into the pit. There is no ritual of attracting (the deity) from the wall (at that point). A small table is [*place*]d. One smears with blood the golden deity, the wall and all the objects belonging to the new deity. He/she consecrates the new deity and (her) temple. Some fat is burned (but) no one eats it' [KUB 29.4 ii 14–39/iii 1–7/iv 31–41 (duplicate KBo 8.90): Miller 2004, pp. 281–3, 287, 296–7]. Several sequences of this foundation ritual take place during the night. Several offerings are given and purification as well as consecration rites occur. According to the texts that we have examined so far, it is clear that the ritual practitioners may perform nocturnal rites for whatever deity. However, we may suggest without too much hesitation that the large number of nocturnal sequences described in this ritual is to be related this time to the nature of the goddess of the night herself, for it is in honor of this deity that the whole foundation ritual is performed.

## 2.2. OTHER TYPES OF PURIFICATION/CONSECRATION RITUALS

## 2.2.1. Consecration by Exposing Something to the Stars

The element that is to be consecrated ‘spends the night under the stars’ (ANA ŠAPAL MUL<sup>HÁ</sup> šešzi). V. Haas suggests that this expression is a Hittite translation from the Akkadian *ina kakkabi tušbât*; it would therefore be a direct borrowing from the Mesopotamian world (Haas 1971, p. 426). Be that as it may, this ritual action is well-attested in the written compositions from Kizzuwatna. For instance, the Water of Purity can be consecrated in this way. Indeed, M.-C. Trémouille (1996, p. 85) believes that the Water of Purity is ‘becoming sacred thanks to its remaining during the night on a roof or inside an open-aired room.’

In the Kizzuwatnian foundation ritual mentioned above, we read: ‘One goes to the Water of [Puri]ty, one brings the Water of Purity in the ancient temple and one places it on the roof. It spends the night under the stars’ (KUB 29.4 ii 43–7: Miller 2004, pp. 283, 285). Another Kizzuwatnian ritual, namely, the ritual of Ammihatna, illustrates even more clearly this ritual action. After a whole series of preliminaries and an incantation in Hurrian language that is apparently supposed to prepare the Water of Purity, the latter is placed on the roof (of a temple, probably) where it remains during the night: ‘The water spends the night under the stars.’<sup>11</sup>

The Water of Purity is not the only ‘magical’ element that is exposed to the power of the night. That is what we understand, for example, from the conjuration ritual of Wattiti that has a therapeutic goal: ‘He/she takes these (objects) for (the things to be) conjured: he/she takes black wool, green/yellow wool, r[ed] wool (and) blue wool. He/she unravels it and he/she stretches it. [ . . . ] a reed (arrow-)shaft and [ . . . ] he/she washes. He/she places [ . . . ] on ordinary bread and, by night, he/she brings it up to the roof. § He/she places it again with the ordinary bread in a ŠEN-vessel under the stars and he/she says this: “From the sky above the thousand stars conjure it. Let the moon god conjure it, let the sun goddess of the earth below, in the dark earth, conjure it!” It (= the ritual object) spends the night under the stars. § The day after, (when) the sun is rising, he/she takes it. The ordinary bread upon which it had been placed, he/she breaks it for the sun god and he/she says (thus): “By night, the thousand stars and the moon god have conjured it. The sun goddess of the earth has conjured it. § Now, you, sun god, conjure it!” He/she brings it down from the roof. He/she waves it around the child’s shoulder and he/she says (thus): “Just like the whorl of the spindle turns, may the evil entrails turn away from the child likewise! Just as the reed (arrow-)shaft does not meet the arrow anymore, may the evil entrails likewise not meet the child (anymore)! May it be diverted (away) from him!”’ [KUB 7.1 ii 13–37 (duplicates = KUB 43.52+, KBo 22.145+): Kronasser 1961, pp. 149–51; Watkins 1982, p. 456; Torri 2003, p. 76]! This passage is particularly valuable because the incantation in Hittite language offers an explanation concerning the magical

power of the night. Indeed, it mentions the power of the stars and also of the moon god. Additionally, it is very interesting to notice the mention of the sun goddess of the earth in this passage, for this goddess is the mistress of the netherworld. Beside this, we should notice that the conjuration that is performed by night under the authority of the astral and the chthonic deities is combined with a second conjuration performed by day under the supervision of the sun god (of the sky), for more efficiency.

### 2.2.2. Consecration by Blood

In Kizzuwatna, consecration by blood is documented by several texts (Beckman, forthcoming).<sup>12</sup> The rite consists in smearing with animal blood an element that is to be consecrated. The Kizzuwatnian foundation ritual already mentioned (Section 2.1.) indicates that this typically Kizzuwatnian rite may take place during the night. In that text, the blood of a sheep that has been sacrificed as *enumašši-* and that has been slaughtered over a pit is apparently used for consecrating the golden effigy of the goddess of the night, as well as the wall of her temple and all her belongings.

### 2.2.3. Consecration Rite Associated to a Food Offering

In the Kizzuwatnian ritual of Papānikri, it is written: 'At nightfall, one fills a loaf of ordinary bread and one consecrates the child' [KBo 5.1 ii 4–5: Strauss 2006, pp. 289 and 297; concerning the consecration of the child to be born in the context of kizzuwatnian birth rituals, see Mouton forthcoming]. The technique that is used for the consecration of the coming child is not specified in this passage, but it seems associated to the bread offering mentioned here. Maybe the consecration results from the bread offering. One should not be surprised by the importance given to food offering in such a context: according to the Hittites, the 'magical' process of consecration results from a divine intervention. It is therefore necessary to incite the deity to perform this 'magical' action. The best way to incite the divinity is to offer it food.

### 2.2.4. Purification/Consecration by Incubation

In the *haššumaš* festival, we read: 'During that night, one consecrates the prince the following way. One makes him lie down and one places at one side and at the other of his head two loaves of ordinary bread. One places at one side of his feet two loaves of ordinary bread and at the other side [two (other) loaves of ordinary bread]. Then, one traces (a circle) [arou]nd them with beer' (IBoT 1.29 Vo 50'–55'). The action consisting in 'making lie down' (*šaššamu-*<sup>13</sup>) the ritual patron in a ritualized manner may be considered, in my view, as an incubation ritual. Indeed, this passage mentions that this ritual sequence takes place during the night, so it could mean that the prince actually sleeps this way the whole night. Moreover, we should notice the creation of a 'magical' circle of beer surrounding the prince and the associated offerings. Be that as it may, this consecration rite is also

directly associated to a food offering, like the preceding text we have examined (Section 2.2.3), and it is probably a way to favor a divine intervention.

Even if we can disagree about the nature of the above mention, everyone agrees on the fact that an incubation ritual is referred to in the ritual of Paškuwatti: ‘When (it is) nightfall, the patient lies down before the [ta]ble itself, one places his [b]ed before the table itself. § The BAR.TE-clothes [or] the mantel which has been placed upon the [sol]dier-[bread], he spreads [them] every night’ (KUB 7.5 ii 14’–19’: Hoffner 1987, pp. 274, 278). As I have already explained elsewhere (Mouton 2003; see also Mouton 2007), lying down in a ritualized way during a purification or an exorcistic ritual may be regarded as a therapeutic incubation. The efficiency of this incubation results from the nature of the dream that the patient receives, as it is the case in the ritual of Paškuwatti. It can also result from the sleep and the night themselves combined with a prolonged physical contact with a ‘magical’ object or substance (for other mentions of therapeutic incubation rituals in hittite texts, see Mouton 2003, pp. 83–7). With the incubation ritual is often combined the deposition of a basket full of offerings under the bed of the patient. It is a practice known from the rituals of Alli, Anniwiyani, and Huwarlu (Mouton 2003, pp. 85–6). Maybe these offerings are destined to the chthonic entities? Maybe the latter are considered responsible for the unhappy past event (in the case of the rituals of Alli and Anniwiyani) or, on the contrary, for the unhappy event to come (in the case of the ritual of Huwarlu, the evil event is predicted by bird oracle)? For a complete edition of these three rituals, see Jakob-Rost 1972 (ritual of Alli) and Bawanyeck 2005 (rituals of Anniwiyani and Huwarlu).

### 2.2.5. Undetermined Techniques of Purification/Consecration

In a ritual against an epidemic in the army, we read: ‘Then, at night, I prepare (the ritual objects). When it is [d]ay-time, the ornithomancer [and] the Old Man [cu]t [a *puppy*] through the middle for the military campaigns and they s[ay] at the same time . . .’ (KUB 7.54 i 10–13: Bawanyeck 2005, p. 128). ‘To prepare’ the ritual objects probably means to consecrate them, among other things. Unfortunately, this passage does not provide us any detail either on the technique used to manage it or on the reason why this consecration is performed during the night.

In a catalog tablet, we observe the mention of a purification ritual taking place during the night: ‘[x tablet(s). Words of Ha]ttušili, son of Zuw[akippi . . . If], at the time of the torch, [ . . . ]’ (KBo 31.1+ iii 2’–3’: Dardano 2006, pp. 196–7). As P. Dardano (2006, p. 207) notices, this ritual is also known by other documents, as we shall see in the following colophon: ‘Third tablet of Hattušili, son of Zuwakipp[i], Old Man of the city of Zīpatta of the land of Zalp(uw)a: if he purifies the king and the queen at the time of the torch’ (Dardano 2006, p. 207). Considering its title, it is particularly frustrating not to be able to provide a complete edition of this composition

because of the widespread use in it of Hattian language which is not well understood. According to what we can understand at first glance, it can be stated that several Hattian deities are involved (Šaru i 24', Katahzipuri i 26', etc.) and that at least one animal sacrifice is performed (the consecrated meat cuts <sup>UZU</sup>šuppa are mentioned in iii 23').<sup>14</sup> Furthermore, the study by O. Soysal of some Hattian words used in this composition has prompted him to identify this text as an exorcistic ritual in which a mythological narrative related to the storm god of Lihzina has been inserted (Soysal 2002). Unfortunately, the *Sitz im Leben* of the nocturnal aspect of this ritual remains unknown.

### 3. Invocation or Conjunction Rituals

In the so-called Šamuha ritual, we read: 'Then during that day, at nightfall, the priest of the goddess of the night takes the Water of Purity. When a star twinkles, one brings to the river the deity for attracting her and he performs in front of the river a ritual (for) attracting the deity and for the *dupšahit*-ritual of the curse. The *dupšahit*-ritual that [ . . . ], one performs (the ritual) for removing the word of the curse. Then one performs the *dupšahit*-ritual. He/she speaks thus: "The ritual patron who [ . . . ] in the *dupšahit*-ritual for the deity, now, deity, may the word of the curse be burned from the ritual patron by the fire of the *dupšahit*-ritual. (You) deity and (you) ritual patron, may you be freed from this anguish!" [One holds] the objects of the queen behind the ritual. [ . . . ] At nightfall, during that day, [ . . . ]. When a star twinkles, [ . . . ]. He/she leaves. One performs the ritual (for) attracting (the deity) through the king [ . . . ] Then, one performs the *dupšahit*-ritual. One takes [ . . . ] from the fire. The ritual patron who [ . . . ] in the *dupšahit*-ritual before the deity, now [I] have just [removed] the deity and the ritual patron [ . . . ] *dupšahit*-ritual. This curse [ . . . ] of the *dupšahit*-ritual. The deity and the ritual patron [ . . . ] from this anguish. One does not hold the objects of the king behind [ . . . *Following the orders of*] My Sun, one performs a recitation. One holds the objects of the queen behind [ . . . ] § When, outside, he/she makes a propitiation gesture in front of the river, [ . . . ]. One comes [ . . . ] a ritual (for) attracting (the deity) before Pirinkir. He/she performs [*the . . . ritual*] likewise and speaks likewise at the same time. [He/she performs] likewise the ritual (for) attracting (the deity) and the *dupšahit*-ritual. One does not hold the objects of the king behind. [*Following the orders*] of My Sun, he/she performs a recitation. One holds the objects of the queen behind' (KUB 29.7+ Ro 58–73/Vo 1–18: Lebrun 1976, pp. 120–1, 128). This passage describes, among other things, an invocation ritual for the goddess of the night. Waiting for the night to fall before invoking such a deity should logically be regarded as being more efficient than during the day. Additionally, we should notice the allusion made to the Water of Purity that has been taken by the priest of the goddess of the night just before the beginning

of the invocation ritual. Unfortunately, the text does not explain the relationship that seems to exist between these two ritual actions. However, it seems reasonable to believe that the Water of Purity is intended for the consecration of the new divine effigy. Indeed, the invocation implies that a 'physical envelope' has been prepared in order to welcome her.

Similarly, KBo 2.4 describes a month festival in honor of the storm god of Nerik and states: 'When the thirteenth day of the month arrives, ablutions (take place) and, at nightfall, the man of the Stormgod calls the Stormgod of Nerik with a *mukar*' [KBo 2.4 i 23–8: Haas 1970, pp. 280–1 and Schuol 2004, p. 18; Schuol (2004, pp. 120–2) suggests to translate <sup>GIS</sup>*mukar* by 'rattle']. Finally, in an invocation ritual for the sun god and Telipinu, one can read: 'At nightfall, she places fire [= embers] from a *pahhuinali*-vessel before the god and she burns fragrant substances as a fumigation. The Old Woman pronounces conjurations (on behalf) of the god patron [= the person who ordered the fabrication of the divine effigy], she makes circles three times, she closes the temple and she leaves. During that day she does not do anything (else)' (VBoT 58 iv 36–9: Laroche 1965, p. 87).

#### 4. Other Types of Rituals (Functions Known or Unknown)

##### 4.1. NIGHT RITUALS TAKING PLACE ON THE ROOF OF A BUILDING

A religious festival mentions the following thing: 'The king comes from the "inner chamber" and he stands in the *halentu*-building. The palace officers bring down a *uera*-object and a jug of wine from the roof. On the *uera*-object are placed seven loaves of ordinary flat bread, *memal* and a *tipa*-object (made of) vine-wood. He/she places them before the window. The [king] bows down and a palace officer brings this up to the roof. By night, the king comes back to the roof, he bows down and he stands (there)' (KUB 55.39 i 13'–20'). The exact meaning of this ritual sequence is unclear to us, and there is no known parallel of this sequence occurring on the roof of the *halentu*-building, at least to my knowledge.

##### 4.2. SUBSTITUTION RITUALS

The Hittite texts frequently mention substitution rituals, but among them only few take place during the night. An example of nocturnal substitution ritual is cited by H. M. Kümmel: '[When it i]s night-time, he/she takes the ancient Labarnas and he/she goes to the mound of the moon god. [ . . . ] and he/she speaks thus: "Because of this matter, I have just come for praying. Listen to me, moon god, my lord! as you, moon god, has given a sign [ . . . ], if you have revealed (something) ill-portent for me, I have just given [you] [sub]stitutes in (my) place. Take them [and leave me (in peace)!]. One leads a living bull up to the mound and one [sac]rifies it on the top of the mound. The king goes up to the mound

and speaks [t]hus: "As (you), moon god, I have just given a sign, if you have revealed (something) ill-portent for me, you have tried to see *my* smoke with (your) eyes [ . . . ]. I have just come myself and [*I have brought for you*] these [sub]stitutes. See their [ . . . ]! May these ones die but may I not die!" [ . . . ] one lets and he/she leads them away' (KUB 24.5+ and duplicates Ro 6'-17': Kümmel 1967, pp. 8-9). The reason why such a substitution ritual is performed during the night is explained by the 'prayer' (*arkuwar*) that should be pronounced at that moment: the king's life has been endangered by a moon omen. Therefore this substitution plays the role of an offering to the moon god. What better time than night to communicate with that deity?

#### 4.3. OTHER NIGHT RITUALS

P. Dardano published a catalog tablet in which a passage mentions a 'ritual of the night' against bewitchment: '[ . . . tablet]. Ritual of the night. If a person (has been) magically treated [= bewitched], (it is) the way one cures her' (Dardano 2006, p. 264; see also the editor's commentary p. 266). A passage of a *babili* ritual states: 'When a star twinkles, the priest covers the wickerwork table with a napkin, he binds a *kirinni*-stone to a *ulih*i-object [ . . . ], furthermore he takes a wickerwork *kurši*-object' (KUB 39.71+ i 33-6: Strauss 2006, p. 196).

The spring festival in honor of the storm god of Nerik says: 'When it is night-time, one places a lamp' (KUB 38.25 i<sup>2</sup> 25': Haas 1970, pp. 276-7). In this context, it seems that the expression 'to place a lamp' is an equivalent to 'to spend the night sleepless/to keep active during the night' (*laknu*-), which we will see below. In other texts, 'to place lamps' and 'to spend the night sleepless/to keep active during the night' are closely associated. It means thus that the ceremony goes on at least during a part of the night. In the text describing a festival in honor of Šaušga of the steppe of the city of Šamuha, we read: 'The king goes to the temple of the ancient Šaušga of the steppe of Šamuha. The king gives an offering of sheep fat with a golden jug filled with wine. The king bows down. Wherever he wants, he will sleep but (in the meanwhile) he sits down in front of Šaušga of the steppe. The musicians and the AZU-practitioner spend the night sleepless' [KUB 27.1 iv 46-50: Wegner 1995, p. 52 (with a different reading)]. While the king is sleeping, some members of the officiating personnel continue the ceremony throughout the night. This passage can be compared with the one documented by several tablets of religious festivals that S. Alp has edited in his synthesis on the Hittite temple (Alp 1983). In those texts, the same outline is repeated in different variants: the king goes to the *halentu*-building, somebody 'cries "curtain!"', 'one closes (the building during) the night' and the curtain is lifted again in the following morning. The apparent isolation of the king by the means of a curtain makes me immediately think of a rite of separation that is typically taking part in rites of passage,

but a contextual study should be undertaken on the whole corpus in order to check this assumption (concerning my research project on rites of passage in Hittite Anatolia, see Mouton 2005).

Finally, we should consider a passage of the ritual of Ayatarša, in which consecrated meat cuts are treated in a way that is very seldom documented (KUB 7.1): 'The *šuppas* spend the night in front of the deity but the day after I take them away and one eats (them) entirely' (KUB 7.1 i 17–18: Kronasser 1961, pp. 142–4). It is difficult to interpret the laying out of the meat cuts. One possibility that I have suggested in my contribution to the VIth International Congress of Hittitology<sup>15</sup> is that it could be related to the magical power of the night. I still believe that this interpretation is possible and the current article shows that the night can indeed affect a cultic object. Another possibility is that the laying out the *šuppas* during the night represents the necessary period of time for the deity to eat her food offering.

### 5. Some Conclusions

At the end of his short chapter on nocturnal rituals, D. H. Engelhard writes: 'This discussion of night-time as an appropriate time for magical rituals has afforded the following insights. 1) Certain deities were more accessible at night than during the day. The chthonioi as well as the Moon-god were more amenable to communication in the dark. 2) Night-time is associated with sexual activity, and hence the most appropriate time to counter-act sexual malfunctionings. 3) Evil demons enjoy perpetrating their malicious machinations under the veil of darkness. To offset these spirits' activity, the Hittite magician chose to perform his rite in the palace during the demons most active time. 4) Certain rituals seem to defy explanation for their nocturnal character. These may fall under the rubric of the "quiet and tranquillity" of the night. Perhaps, it is just more peaceful at night and easier to perform the ritual without interruption' (Engelhard 1970, p. 210).

Let us consider D. H. Engelhard's conclusions one by one. His point 4) defines night by the absence of certain qualities, unlike the other three. The current article has suggested the validity of point 1), namely, that there is indeed, in Hittite Anatolia, a privileged link between the night and the netherworld. As far as the relationship between the night and the astral deities is concerned, it is self evident. However, night rituals do not only involve these two categories of deities (chthonic and astral deities). The texts presented here show that other deities could also be solicited during the night. Even if it is a tempting suggestion, the conclusion 2) cannot be supported. The main reason for this is that this argument was based on a controversial interpretation of the epithets *lulimi* and *innarawant-* describing the god LAMMA in the ritual of Anniwiyani (Engelhard 1970, pp. 205–6). The precise meaning of these two adjectives is still uncertain (Bawanypeck 2005, pp. 184–5). The point 3) is mainly inspired from the Mesopotamian

data as E. Reiner has presented them. In the Hittite corpus, only one incantation participating in the ritual of Huwarlu and addressed to a puppy figurine placed near the door-bolt could support this view. This incantation says: 'You, (you are) the puppy of the table of the king and queen. Just like, by day, you do not let any stranger in the house, (likewise) during this night do not let any evil thing (enter)' (Kronasser 1962, 90 i 23–6 and Bawanypeck 2005, pp. 24–5)!

Various types of rituals are performed at night: sacrifices, conjuration or invocation rites, and purification or consecration rites. Certainly, some nocturnal rites seem to be undistinguishable for rituals performed during the day. However, there is a difference. The incantation in Hittite language that is pronounced during the ritual of Wattiti (Section 2.2.1.) explains, at least in my view, the kind of link that exists between night and the divine powers. It is at that moment that it is most convenient to communicate with astral and chthonic deities. Therefore, in Hittite Anatolia, it seems that the 'magical power' of the night mainly resides in the fact that it makes the two worlds (the one of the humans and the one of the gods and spirits) closer, temporarily creating a direct connection between them.

### Short Biography

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### Notes

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<sup>1</sup> The Hittite texts will be designated by their publication number, according to the hittitological tradition. The abbreviations related to the text publications are: KBo, Keilschrifttexte aus Boğazköy; KUB, Keilschrifturkunden aus Boğazköy; IBoT, Istanbul Arkeoloji Müzelerinde Bulunan Boğazköy Tableteri; VBoT, Verstreute Boghazköi-Texte.

<sup>2</sup> According to Haas (1971, p. 426), this last expression would be a Mesopotamian borrowing. See also Beckman 1983, p. 110, who rightly indicates that this expression simply mentions the beginning of dark night, not the appearance of a shooting star (see at last Strauss 2006, p. 196 with bibliography).

<sup>3</sup> Haas 1994, p. 906: 'Obgleich in den Beschwörungsritualen der Zeitpunkt, an dem die Riten stattfinden sollen, nur gelegentlich angegeben wird, so ist doch anzunehmen, dass er sehr sorgfältig gewählt worden ist.' In the following page, he writes: '[...] manchmal hält sich der Akteur des Rituals auch während der Nacht am Ort des Ritualgeschehens auf, um die

Gottheiten zu beopfern und anzurufen. [...] Darüber, wann die Behexungen ausgeführt werden, sind nur spärliche Angaben zu finden; es liegt nahe, dass sie während der beiden Dämmerungen und der Nacht vollzogen wurden.' See also Haas 1994, p. 691.

<sup>4</sup> That is what Polvani also notices (2005, p. 183). Similarly, the offerings for the moon god are logically given during the night; see Engelhard 1970, p. 209 with bibliography.

<sup>5</sup> Hittian culture corresponds to the Hittite heartland.

<sup>6</sup> In the Kizzuwatnian birth ritual KUB 9.22 ii 19: Beckman 1983, pp. 90–1. In a religious ceremony in honor of the storm god of Aleppo: Souček/Siegelová 1974, pp. 46–7, ii 7 et 14. Other occurrences are mentioned in Haas/Wilhelm (1974, p. 88).

<sup>7</sup> Kizzuwatna is the region corresponding to the classical Cilicia.

<sup>8</sup> In this passage, the plural is used.

<sup>9</sup> This passage is sometimes rendered as a direct question. For a translation similar to mine, see Christiansen 2006, pp. 24–5.

<sup>10</sup> According to Laroche (1973, pp. 96–9), it is a meat offering which goes together with *zurki*- 'blood offering'.

<sup>11</sup> KBo 5.2 ii 28: Strauss 2006, pp. 224, 237. The fact that the Water of Purity has been placed on the roof can be understood from KBo 5.2 ii 1 (Strauss 2006, pp. 223, 236): 'He [= the AZU practitioner] brings it up to the roof.'

<sup>12</sup> All my thanks to Professor G. Beckman who kindly provided me this article.

<sup>13</sup> CHD Š, 305–306 sub *šašnu*-, *šaššanu*-.

<sup>14</sup> Other offerings are mentioned after the colophon, but considering the surprising presence of this latter before the end of the tablet, these specifications may belong to a separate composition.

<sup>15</sup> The title of this contribution is: 'Quelques différences régionales concernant le sacrifice sanglant en Anatolie hittite'. The acts of the colloquium are in press.

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