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Power and Opposition in the Ancient Near Eastern and  
Mediterranean World

edited by Mait Kõiv and Vladimir Sazonov



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## Old Hittite Opposition in the Religious Aspect

Vladimir SHELESTIN\*

**Abstract.** *The paper proposes a new approach to the conflict between Hattušili I and Tawananna using the new interpretation of some historiologiae of Zuwi's ritual. A political interpretation of these historiologiae explains their content better than a magical one. Tracing the parallels between the animal figures in Zuwi's ritual and in the political rhetoric of Hattušili I allows us to reconstruct an alliance between the royal relatives as well as the priesthood being the opponents to the Old Hittite external expansion.*

**Rezumat:** *Studiul de față propune o nouă abordare cu privire la conflictul dintre Hattušili I și Tawananna pe baza unei noi analize asupra a unor historiologiae din cadrul ritualului lui Zuwi. O interpretare politică a acestora poate explica întregul context mai bine decât una strict religioasă. Identificarea paralelelor dintre figurile animaliere din ritualul lui Zuwi și retorica politică a lui Hattušili I ne permite să reconstituim o alianță din sânul familiei regale, precum și modul în care sacerdoșii se opuneau expansiunii Vechiului Regat Hittit.*

**Keywords:** Old Hittite history, Hattušili I, Tawananna, Zuwi's ritual, political metaphors, Hittite animals.

### Introduction

The opposition to the Hittite royal power in the Old Kingdom attracts a lot of attention, not least because of the polemics concerning it in the Old Hittite didactic literature. In these masterpieces of rhetoric, the Hittite kings describe many examples of their struggle for power with their relatives who appear as political troublemakers. One of the most important conflicts of this epoch was the confrontation between Tabarna Hattušili I and a person called Tawananna, described in the Edict of Hattušili (CTH 5).

The identification of this Tawananna is debatable, as different scholars identify her as either the aunt,<sup>1</sup> the mother,<sup>2</sup> a sister,<sup>3</sup> a wife,<sup>4</sup> or a daughter<sup>5</sup> of Hattušili I. We do not know the reasons for the political conflict between Hattušili I and Tawananna and the strictly

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<sup>1</sup> BEAL 1983, 126; SOYSAL 1987, 251; FORLANINI 2010, 117, 124.

<sup>2</sup> SOMMER, FALKENSTEIN 1938, 212.

<sup>3</sup> DOVGYALO 1968, 116; IVANOV 1968, 71; HOFFNER 1980, 202; BRYCE 1981, 16; CARRUBA 1992, 80; SÜRENHAGEN 1998, 88; YIĞIT 2005, 788; FREU 2007, 95.

<sup>4</sup> GÖTZE 1928, 17; HARDY 1941, 199; BEAL 1983, 126.

<sup>5</sup> BIN-NUN 1975, 53; DE MARTINO 1991, 59; STEINER 1996, 608; GILAN 2015, 89.

documentary evidence does not reflect this dispute. The bulk of the current discussion revolve around the sister and/or daughter of Hattušili I, and the scholars who consider both alternatives prefer the latter one, supposing that the exiled (according to the Testament of Hattušili (CTH 6)) daughter resumed the fight against the father.<sup>6</sup> The sister of Hattušili I, as we know from his Testament, was not neutralized by the king in the same degree as his daughter was,<sup>7</sup> and the Edict does not tell that Tawananna's actions would have trespassed some earlier restrictions. Therefore, this Tawananna should be a sister of the king.

### The nature of the conflict between Tabarna and Tawananna

Neither the Testament nor the Edict describe properly the reasons for the conflicts between the king and his relatives. Hattušili I emphasises that other people exerted influence on his relatives: *aḫ-ḫu-šu ù aḫ-ḫa-tu-šu-ú a-wa-a-ti ka-aš-ša-a-ti it-ta-na-ab-ba-lu-šum-ma* 'his brothers and sisters constantly report to him cold words' (KUB 1.16 I 10–11) and tries to reduce such an influence: *nu-ut-ta LÚ.MEŠŠU.GI URUKÙ.BABBAR-TI le-e me-mi-eš-kán-du* 'The elders of Hatti will not speak to you!' (KUB 1.16 II 60). The king does not specify the kind of opposition these influencers belonged to.

Some researchers view these conflicts as an internecine struggle caused by the large number of royal clans and the underdevelopment of the stately bureaucracy.<sup>8</sup> However, these factors characterise the organization of the Hittite administration throughout its history,<sup>9</sup> but the conflict with Tawananna seems to present a collapse of rather unusual scale. What we know about the conflict points to the problem of succession: the Hittite king established the younger Labarna, the son of his sister (Tawananna) as his heir, but he turned out to be not the best candidate and was finally deprived of power in favour of Hattušili's grandson Muršili, whereas Tawananna with her progeny were ostracized. However, a war of succession would have started after the deprivation of the heir, not before this. The attempts to understand this conflict as a part of a long-term struggle between royal clans<sup>10</sup> seem therefore questionable. The clan of Tawananna would have had no interest to be disloyal towards Hattušili I as long as the younger Labarna was accepted to the Hittite throne. Hattušili I was presently fighting his children representing another clan, as described in his Testament, which means that the wishes of this other clan to reduce Tawananna's influence would scarcely have led the king to oppose her.

<sup>6</sup> DE MARTINO, IMPARATI 1998, 394–395.

<sup>7</sup> According to the reconstruction of KUB 1.16 III 13–22 by SOMMER and FALKENSTEIN (1938, 12–13), the "Testament" describes in §17 the exile of the royal daughter from Hattuša to a countryside. The problem is that outside of *lacunae MÍ.LUGAL* "royal daughter" appears nearby only in KUB 1.16 III 25, the next paragraph, and not in §17. Nevertheless, the royal sister does not emerge in these lines at all.

<sup>8</sup> LIVERANI 1988, 431, 444; DE MARTINO 2016, 27.

<sup>9</sup> BILGIN 2018, 453.

<sup>10</sup> FORLANINI 2010, 124.



Ḫattušili I depicts in his Edict the oppositional actions of Tawananna as the removal of the capital from Ḫattuša: [ta] ki-še-ra-aš-ša-an e-ep-z[i ... ú-w]a-te-ez-zi ta ú-iz-zi <sup>URU</sup>Ḫ[a-at-tu-ša-an ta]-mi-u-ma-an i-e-zi ta eš-ḫa-na-aš [ut-tar i-e-zi] ‘[And sh]e will seize his hand [... and will l]ead and come. She will make the city of Ḫ[attuša a]nother one. And [she will make the matter] of blood.’ (KBo 3.27 obv. 3-5), m[a-a-an-]ša-an ḫa-a-ši-ṛi p[a-aḫ-ḫ]u-ur [n]a-at-ta pa-ra-iš-ṛte-ṛni ta ú-iz-zi <sup>URU</sup>Ḫa-]at[-tu-ša-an] ṛMUŠ-ṛaš ḫu-la-a-li-az-zi ‘[f] you will [n]ot blow on the [f]ire in the stove, she will come and wrap [Ḫ]at[tuša] like the snake’ (KBo 3.27 obv. 25-27). The king underlines that Tawananna disturbs the order that he had established. The capital was not a traditional site of some concrete clan of the Hittite elite, but the innovation of Ḫattušili I – the special link between this king and Ḫattuša are visible<sup>11</sup> even if their names had nothing in common.<sup>12</sup>

The most remarkable results of Ḫattušili’s reign were his campaigns outside Anatolia. He was the first Hittite king who tried to conquer Syrian states, and despite his failure, the interactions between Central Anatolia and Syria intensified. This could have led to a partial loss of influence of the traditional Hittite elite. The Puḫanu Chronicle (CTH 16) could tell us how some religious innovations of Ḫattušili I, like the introduction of the Storm-God of Ḫalab, met with resistance from a part of elite.<sup>13</sup> As this opposition took on a religious nature, we should search for its traces in religious texts, which would help a better understanding of Tawananna’s role in these events.

### The conflict reflected in the ritual of Zuwi

We can find such a text in the collection of the rituals of Zuwi (CTH 412)<sup>14</sup>. Zuwi was a magician of Luwian origin<sup>15</sup> who composed the ritual for the possibility of the Storm-God becoming angry. The language of this ritual text shows its Old Hittite dating and paleographical analysis suggests that one of the manuscripts (KBo 17.17+KBo 30.30) is from this period. There is moreover a Middle Hittite manuscript in this corpus (KUB 12.63+) which contains the *historiolae* with motives similar to those in the Testament of Ḫattušili and the Edict of Ḫattušili and which could offer an additional perspective to the discussion. However,

<sup>11</sup> The earliest major building projects of the Old Hittite period in Ḫattuša seem to have taken place in late 17<sup>th</sup> century BC, SCHACHNER 2017.

<sup>12</sup> BEAL (2003, 25) argues against transferring the capital to Ḫattuša by Ḫattušili I, but he admits that Ḫattušili’s heir Muršili I would be the first king of this dynasty who was crowned in Ḫattuša. MARTÍNEZ (2016, 178–182) shows that most of the arguments for Ḫattuša being the capital of Ḫattušili’s ancestors are tentative. On the lack of the onomastic ties between these personal name and city name, see YAKUBOVICH 2013, 72.

<sup>13</sup> GILAN 2004.

<sup>14</sup> The *editiones princeps* GIORGIERI 1988 and MORINI n.d. are not published and are not available to us.

<sup>15</sup> Even if we reject any traces of the Luwian influence on the ritual’s text (like MELCHERT 2013, 161), the name of Zuwi looks like Luwian (ZEHNDER 2010, 324–325).

it is not clear whether this Middle Hittite copy of an Old Hittite text<sup>16</sup> belongs to the rituals of Zuwi at all,<sup>17</sup> but we will retain the name of Zuwi for KUB 12.63+ technical reasons.

The text contains the description of treating with a bull, and the dialogue between people and the bull shows that it took place during a war campaign:

*nu-za-pa KASKAL-ši ʾku-u-unʾ GU<sub>4</sub>.MAḪ-an tar-ia-an-da-an wa-a[r-(kán-ta-an) e-ep-pir xx nu-u(š-ša-an)] ʾpu-nu-ušʾ-ki-iz-zi ku-it-mu e-ep-tin nu-uš-še LÚ.MEŠ a-ap-p[a me-ma-an-zi la-aḫ(-ḫa-aš-ki-u-wa-ni-wa)] n[u(-)x] KASKAL-ši tu-uk ḫa-an-da-a-u-en UM-MA GU<sub>4</sub>.MAḪ ma-u-wa-m[(u e)-ep-te-ni(?) xx nu-wa-r]a-at šu-ma-aš a-aš-ma-u-wa-aš-ma-aš-ša-an aš-šu-wa-an-da-an [(ḫi-ik-mi)]*

And [they caught] on the road this fat[t]ened, robust bull, [... and] he asks them: ‘Why you caught me?’. And the men<sup>18</sup> re[ply] to him: ‘We are going to [w]ar, an[d ...] we fixed you on the road’. Thus (says) the bull: ‘If you c[atch] me, [...] I will pass it to you, look there, the favoured one to you’ (KUB 12.63 obv. 9-11 w. dupl. KBo 22.118 r. col. 1-6, mainly after Hoffner 1976: 337 and Haas 2003: 426).

The image of the bull appears in the texts of Ḫattušili I as the symbol of power. Usually, scholars identify the bull with the Storm-God of Ḫattuša, which is a well-known association in the Hittite texts, but some researchers interpret him as the Hittite king himself.<sup>19</sup> The previously mentioned Puḫanu Chronicle describes how a bull opened the way to the sea through the mountains using his horns (KUB 31.4+KBo 3.41 obv. 15-19). The ritual of Zuwi swaps the participants of that action. The bull is not especially mighty here, while his opponents, not he, were going to the campaign.<sup>20</sup> The following expression [(GU<sub>4</sub>.MAḪ)] Ú-UL tar-pa-aš-ša-aš-ši-iš ‘The bull is not his ritual substitute’ (KUB 12.63 obv. 16 w. dupl. KBo 22.118 r. col. 16) describes this bull as unfit for the substitution ritual allegedly depicted at the beginning of the Puḫanu Chronicle.<sup>21</sup>

These parallels between the *historiola* from the ritual of Zuwi and the Puḫanu Chronicle show that both texts could reflect similar (if not the same) conflicts between the parties of the Hittite elite. If the conflict reflected by the Puḫanu Chronicle was the fight between the adherents of the traditional values and the supporters of the expansion into Syria bringing new cults to Ḫattuša,<sup>22</sup> we could interpret the ritual of Zuwi in the same way. The different

<sup>16</sup> HUTTER 2000, 104-105.

<sup>17</sup> GIORGIERI (2011) in his unpublished lecture has shown that the position of *ḫurkelaš*-people does not correspond to the main idea of the ritual of Zuwi and traces the parallels between KUB 12.63+ and some Hittite texts on the black magic.

<sup>18</sup> KBo 22.118 r. col. 4: male gods (DINGIR.LÚ.MEŠ).

<sup>19</sup> See overview in COLLINS 1998, 16-17 and GILAN 2015, 315.

<sup>20</sup> Or rather returning from the campaign, as the similar account of the same events KBo 8.67(+)/KBo 17.23 take place in autumn, according to SOYSAL 2007, 89.

<sup>21</sup> DE MARTINO 2003, 16.

<sup>22</sup> So (not without hesitation) GILAN 2004, 289, 292. GILAN (2015, 325) later became more skeptical, but I think that the network of allegorical images shared by different Hittite texts should reflect a certain religious-political tradition rather than come “aus Freude am Erzählen”.

images of the same heroes in both texts could indicate the different stages of the conflict, the different hypothetical variants of its course or the different authorship of the accounts.

The next passage of the ritual of Zuwi describes the impossible task given by the priest from the Temple of the Storm-God. It asks the *hurkelaš*-people<sup>23</sup> to conduct the actions performed by the bull in the Puḫanu Chronicle, to overcome the mountains, but it is impossible for them:

*ta-lu-ga-uš-wa* KASKAL.ḪÁ *ma-ni-ku[-an-da-aḫ-tin ma-ni-ku-an-du-ša]* *ta-lu-ga-nu-ut-tin* ḪUR.SAG.MEŠ *pár-ga-nu-uš ma-ni-ku-an-da-aḫ-tin ma-ni-ku-an-du-ša p[ár-ga-nu-ut-tin]* UR.BAR.RA *ki-iš-šar-ta e-ep-tin* UR.ḤMAḪ *ga-nu-ut e-ep-tin* ÍD-an *k[u-wa-an-ku-nu-ur-ra ḫar-tin(?)]* MUŠ-an *zu-wa-al-wa-la-a-tin na-an* LUGAL-wa-aš *a-ḥ-aš-ka pé-e-ḫu-te-et-tin nu* DI-[xxx] *nu an-ni-iš-ki-mi ku-in na-an-kán* ŠUM-ŠU *ḫal-zi-ḫi-ḫi nu-uš-ma-aš am-mu-uk-ka<sub>4</sub> [xxx]* LÚ.MEŠ *a-ap-pa i-ia-an-nir* UM-MA ŠU<sup>1</sup><-NU>-MA *Ú-UL-za šu-wa-u-e-ni da-lu-ga-uš [KASKAL.ḪÁ-uš Ú-UL-uš ma-ni-ku-wa-an-du-la] ma-ni-ku-wa-an-du-ša* KASKAL.ḪÁ-uš *Ú-UL-aš da-lu-uk-nu-la* ḪUR.SAG.ḪÁ *pár-ga-mu-u[š Ú-UL-uš ma-ni-ku-wa-an-du-la] kap-pa-uš* ḪUR.SAG.MEŠ *Ú-UL-uš pár-ga-nu-la* UR.BAR.RA *ki-iš-šar-ta Ú-UL e[-ep-pir* UR.MAḪ *ga-nu-ut Ú-UL e-ep-pir] ÍD-kán ku-wa-an-ku-nu-ur-ra pé-eš-ši-ir na-at ḫar-ra-at-ta Ú-UL* MUŠ-an *z[u-wa-al-wa-la-a-ir na-an LUGAL-wa-aš a-aš-ka] pé-e-ḫu-te-er Ú-UL ḫa-an-né-eš-ša-še-et ḫa-an-na-at Ú-UL ut-tar na-a[k-ki-xx]*

‘Sho[rten] the long roads [and] lengthen [the short ones]! Lower the high mountains and r[aise] the low ones! Catch the wolf by hand, catch the lion by knee, [and hold] the river [and the rockfall]! Pin down the snake and bring it to the royal gate, and the co[urt will take place(?)]!’ For whom I am performing, I call him by his name. And [...] you and me. The men returned. Thus they (said): ‘We fulfill nothing. The long [roads, they are not for shortening], and the short roads, [they are not for lengthening]. The high mountains, [they are not for lowering], and the low mountains, they are not for raising’. They did not c[atch] the wolf by hand, [they did not catch the lion by knee], they neglected the river and the rockfall, and did not hold it. [They] did not p[in down] the snake and did [not] bring [it to the royal gate], and its case was not judged, and the affair [was] agg[ravated] (KUB 12.63 obv. 24–33, mainly after Friedrich 1944: 209–210).

If the *hurkelaš*-people committed a sin when they ate the bull from the previous passage (KUB 12.63 obv. 17), it would mean that the sympathies of the author are the same as those of Puḫanu. This narration, however, gives another alternative: what would have happened if the bull had not opened the path through the mountains? The *hurkelaš*-people also needed to catch three animals – the wolf, the lion and the snake. These animals should symbolize here

<sup>23</sup> See PELED 2020: 167–168 for the latest discussion of their nature.

not the barbarous world,<sup>24</sup> but the concrete opponents of the Storm-God<sup>25</sup> or of the master of the ritual.<sup>26</sup>

The snake can be clearly associated with Tawananna, whom Ḫattušili I called by this derogatory nickname several times (KUB 1.16 I 10, II 10, 20; KBo 3.27 obv. 27).<sup>27</sup> The nature of this association has been considered as a trivial metaphor for the evil woman,<sup>28</sup> or as the indication on Tawananna's sorcery practices,<sup>29</sup> or as the image of destructive force (constituting a trio with the lion and the wolf).<sup>30</sup> However, the ties between Tawananna and the sorcery practices look speculative,<sup>31</sup> for Ḫattušili I would have mentioned such practices in the same manner as he prohibits Ḫaštayar from consulting with the Old Women.

Some scholars have traced back all three creatures as the trio of damaging forces to the ritual of Pittei texts (KUB 44.4+KBo 13.241 rev. 32–33; KUB 35.145 rev. 14–16).<sup>32</sup> However, the snake appears in Pittei's ritual only once and has feet, whereas the lion and the wolf appear in the previous part of the same text without any reptiles (KUB 44.4+KBo 13.241 rev. 23–24). Even if the appearance of the reptile together with the lion and the wolf in the contexts mentioned above proves that the idea of the existence of that trio was current, the reptile there had feet, while there is no indication of reptiles with feet in KUB 12.63.<sup>33</sup> For this reason, the idea of the trivial metaphor for the evil woman looks still preferable for this case, and this woman-snake should be Tawananna.

### Who is the lion in the ritual of Zuwi?

The lion and the wolf constitute a more stable pair of negative creatures in the Hittite rituals (besides the aforementioned contexts of the trio, e.g. KBo 21.6 obv. 9–12).<sup>34</sup> Both animals symbolize the positive values in the political rhetoric of Ḫattušili I: [šu-]mi-in-za-na ÌR.MEŠ-am-ma-an UR.BAR.RA-aš ma-a-an pa-an-g[ur-še-me-it] 1-EN e-eš-tu 'Let [y]our clan, that

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<sup>24</sup> COLLINS 1989, 86.

<sup>25</sup> HUTTER 2000, 98.

<sup>26</sup> HAAS 2003, 462.

<sup>27</sup> IVANOV 1968; ARCHI 1987, 26.

<sup>28</sup> SOMMER, FALKENSTEIN 1938, 212. However, this metaphor usage looks unique in the Hittite corpus, which makes it not so trivial.

<sup>29</sup> BIN-NUN 1975, 115; MURPHY 2002, 438.

<sup>30</sup> HAAS 2003, 474–475.

<sup>31</sup> ARCHI 1977, 484; HAAS 1977, 156.

<sup>32</sup> COLLINS 1989, 219–220; GIORGIERI 2011.

<sup>33</sup> Assuming that the Sumerogram MUŠ in the Hittite usage should cover both legless reptiles like snakes and the reptiles having feet like lizards (cf. COLLINS 1989, 207–208) adds the argument against equality between reptiles from Zuwi's and Pittei's rituals, as catching a snake implies *pinning* it down with a stick (like in Zuwi's ritual), whereas catching a lizard implies using a slip knot.

<sup>34</sup> HAAS 2003, 462–463.

of my servants, be united like that of the wolf' (KBo 3.27 obv. 15–16),<sup>35</sup> *i-na u4-ma-ti-ma ir-t[ī]DPu-ra-an ki-i-ma UR.MAḪ LUGAL.GAL i-te-ti-iq* 'Within (a few) days the Great King crossed the bank of Purana (river) like a lion' (KBo 10.1 obv. 34).<sup>36</sup> The ritual of Zuwi does not perceive these animals as evil creatures in the same degree as the snake, for only the snake was judged by the king. That is the reason to dissociate the lion and wolf from their image in other Hittite rituals. The expression *kessarta ep-* 'to catch by hand' does not occur in other contexts linked to the wolf, but is, in the Annals of Ḫattušili I (KBo 10.2 I 29) and later texts (e.g. KUB 31.127 I 51), one of the blessing gestures of the Sun-God. This argues for the political interpretation of these figures rather than the magical one.

We can identify the wolf as the symbol of political unity between the Hittite king and his subjects, the audience of his Testament and Edict, whom the king asked to be united like wolves. The task to catch the wolf by hand would have had a double meaning: on the one hand, it denotes the elimination of the supporters of the Hittite king; on the other hand, it parodies the blessing gesture of the Sun-God, carried out not by the god but by the *ḫurkelaš-*people.

The identity of the lion seems obvious, as it is the well-known self-definition of Ḫattušili I.<sup>37</sup> He was the only known Old Hittite king who used this image, but in some of his texts, this definition applies to other persons, like Muršili I: [DINGIR-LI]M-iš UR.MAḪ-aš pé-di UR[.MAḪ-an-pát ti-it-ta-nu-zi] '[The go]d [will install only] the li[on] on the lion's place!' (KUB 1.16 II 39). However, we do not have any animal simile for Muršili I in the texts of this epoch, whereas Ḫattušili I hardly was the lion of KUB 12.63, because this lion is not the king himself and looks to be the actor of the same stage as Tawananna 'the snake' who should be brought to the royal court. In the absence of a clear association of this image with Muršili I, we can connect it with the Young Labarna as the heir of Ḫattušili I, who was to become the successor of the king and thus the next 'lion'.

## Conclusions

The *historiolae* of the ritual of Zuwi can shed light on the religious aspect of the Old Hittite opposition present in the epoch of Ḫattušili I. If the political rather than magical interpretation of the animal images in these *historiolae* is correct, we can summarize their fabula and context as follows: the Syrian campaigns of Ḫattušili I led to the inclusion of the Syrian gods in the Hittite pantheon. The introduction of the Storm-God of Ḫalab could undermine the position of some members of the Hittite priesthood, especially those who

<sup>35</sup> COLLINS (1989, 280–281) identifies the *wetna*-animals in the similar passage of KUB 1.16 II 46 with the striped hyena or the golden jackal, but neither species has a similar clannish social organization as that of wolves. On the possible coexistence of several names for the wolf in Hittite, see GAMKRELIDZE and IVANOV 1995, 413.

<sup>36</sup> For more examples for the lion, see COLLINS 1998.

<sup>37</sup> COLLINS 1998.

were connected with the cult of the Storm-God of Ḫattuša, and they expressed their displeasure by creating *historiolae* which pose a hypothetical situation of Ḫattušili's failure to start his Syrian campaign. In this situation the Hittite troops did not discover the pathway to Syria ("the long roads are not for shortening"), the Hittite kept its unity ("they did not catch the wolf by hand"), the Young Labarna did not lose his right to the throne ("they did not catch the lion by knee"), and the trial of Tawananna did not take place ("its case was not judged").

The author of the *historiolae* who used the animal images from the political rhetoric of Ḫattušili I for imagining an alternative history of his rule connected the initial successes of Ḫattušili in Syria with the failed conspiracy of Tawananna. However, he did not show any specific ties between Tawananna and the priests of the Storm-God of Ḫattuša, although both parties lost their influence as a result of the Syrian campaigns of Ḫattušili I, as can be deduced from these *historiolae*. It is difficult to say whether the confrontation between Ḫattušili I and Tawananna had a religious nature, but her alliance with the part of Hittite priesthood against the innovations of the king could have been reflected afterwards in the ritual composed by the priests of the Storm-God.

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