

language and the field devoted to its study. Given the authors' clear commitment to broader accessibility and an engaging approach to ancient language instruction, one may hope to see a revised edition of this grammar in the future that addresses these issues.

Wheaton College Dept. of Modern & Classical Languages 501 College Ave. Wheaton, Illinois 60187, USA	Andrew Burlingame drew.burlingame@wheaton.edu
--	--

Andrea TRAMERI, *Purifying a House from Blood. A Hittite Ritual for the Ancient Gods (CTH 446)*, Columbus, GA, Lockwood Press, 2022. xvi–248 p. 18.50 × 26.00. €65.00.

The more than thirty thousand fragments of cuneiform tablets unearthed at Hattuša / Boğazköy provide us with a huge amount of information concerning Hittite ritual practice, a topic that never ceases to produce research studies. The book under review results from the MA thesis submitted by the author at the University of Pavia in 2012, which subsequently was revised and expanded. The work presents a new edition of a Hittite ritual performed to purify a house that has somehow been polluted or contaminated, either by bloodshed or by other cause of impurity. The text, currently classified as n. 446 in the *Catalogue des Textes Hittites*, was previously edited by H. Otten in 1961 (“Eine Beschwörung der Unterirdischen aus Boğazköy”, *ZA* 54, 114–157) but, as pointed out by the author in the Preface (p. vii), the retrieval, over the following decades, of significant new fragments, included in more recent translations of the text (B. J. Collins 1997; J. Miller 2008), but not available in a proper philological edition, makes a new edition of this ritual a welcome contribution to the field.

A short resumé of the preceding studies on the text (in which a reference to Haas 1994, 282–289, where the ritual is erroneously attributed to a practitioner called the “diviner of the storm-god”, could have been added) is also provided by the author in the Preface. The content of the book is organized into six chapters. The first begins with a short overview of the archaeological find-spots of the tablets. It is interesting to note how manuscripts belonging to this corpus have been uncovered on Büyükkale, in Temple 1 of the lower city (the majority) and in the so-called *Haus am Hang*, which is certainly indicative of a particular interest in this particular document, even though the *ratio* behind the distribution of the manuscripts between the several locations of the Hittite capital is still elusive. In the following paragraphs, the author provides a comprehensive paleographical analysis of all the tablets recording the ritual, focusing in particular on the three main testimonies, KUB 7.41 (tablet A), KBo 10.45+ (B) and KUB 41.8+ (C). According to the author’s analysis, which follows similar considerations already proposed by E. Neu and Ch. Rüster (in Fs. Otten 1973), the last two manuscripts represent Late Hittite versions, while exemplar A can be interpreted as a Middle Hittite copy, which could be dated tentatively to the early New Kingdom. A further chronological subdivision between copies B and C, proposed by Neu and Rüster, with C being possibly slightly “older” than B, is rightly dismissed by the author as difficult to prove, considering that the differences between the two manuscripts are not such as to rule out the possibility that they depend on different scribal habits. The dating of the tablets, based on a close palaeographical investigation of a set of diagnostic signs, carried out by means

of a systematic collation of the photographs currently available on the Hethitologie Portal Mainz, is further confirmed by the analysis of their orthographic, morpho-syntactic and lexical characteristics. In all, this section of the book shows a commendable level of attention to philological basics.

In the second chapter, the author discusses the content of the ritual, focusing in particular on five topics: the scope and nature of the so-called “purification rituals” and the Hittite concept of purity, the deities mentioned in the ritual and their function, the background of the composition in a historical perspective, the goal of the ritual and its general structure. In paragraph 2.1, the author briefly summarizes the *Sitz im Leben* of the text within the Hittite ritual corpus. The author follows the commonly accepted notion that Hittite ritual texts can be divided into two categories (following the definitions given by the scribes themselves in the colophons): rituals performed for specific circumstances and recurrent ceremonies inserted in an official cult calendar, defined as “festivals” or *Kultrituale*. This distinction is not wrong *per se*, but does not reflect, in my opinion, the complexity of the Hittite organization of cult activities. As I have tried to show elsewhere: F. G. Barsacchi (2017), *Le feste ittite del tuono*, 18–24; F. G. Barsacchi (2023), “The administration of sacred time in Hittite Anatolia”, 82, some Hittite ceremonies, such as the so-called *Gewitterrituale* (CTH 631), are clearly performed on particular occasions and do not have a precise chronological setting, but they are nonetheless part of a regular calendrical system, based not on astronomical calculations but on the observation of natural cycles.

Concerning the notion of purity, the author rightly states, following M. Hutter (2013): “the status of purity of a place or person was not an intrinsic state, but one of ritual ‘neutrality’, identified as the absence of pollution” (p. 22). It is the condition defined in Hittite as *parkui-*, the second degree of purity after the one designated by the adjective *šuppi-*, reserved for consecrated objects, places, or persons. The scope of the book under review is eminently philological, but some additional considerations of a historico-religious nature concerning the meaning of the term *parkui-* and its opposite, the notion of *papratar*, would have been useful here in order to provide a non-specialist reader with some basic notions which are essential in order to get a better understanding of the ritual and its purpose. More specific information concerning Hittite purification rites are provided later in the book (in chapter 4), but I believe that at least a reference to A. Mouton (2013), “The sacred in Hittite Anatolia: a tentative definition”, should perhaps have been added here.

Paragraph 2.3 is dedicated to a general investigation of the deities mentioned in the ritual. The author’s considerations are based on a careful evaluation of the most recent secondary literature on the subject. He is cautious about identifying the Sun-goddess of the Earth mentioned in the ritual with the Luwian sun-goddess (p. 26), and rightly so, even though in other parts of the book (p. 151) he does refer to the “Anatolian Sun Goddess of the Earth”. Insofar as it is possible, or even sensible, to attempt to identify local streams of tradition in the transmission of Hittite ritual documents from Ḫattuša, the deity of the Netherworld to whom the epithet “Sun-goddess of the Earth” is given in this ritual is certainly not a Luwian deity, belonging to an Anatolian religious background, but rather a Hurrian goddess, probably (but not necessarily) to be identified with Allani. If not, the deity would represent the only clear central Anatolian feature in CTH 446. Interpreting the presence of this goddess as “a secondary development deriving from the substantial resemantization of the original Hurrian-Kizzuwatnean traditions at Ḫattuša” (p. 27) is certainly fascinating but, in my opinion, not necessary in this case, considering that Allani and the deity defined as Sun-goddess of the Earth were in all likelihood already identified in the composite, Hurrian-Luwian, environment of Kizzuwatna.

In n. 24 the author states: “the rare association of Ištar with some centres of central Anatolia can only be explained through cult importation, promoted by the southern Anatolian affiliation of the Hittite dynasty in the early fourteenth century” (p. 27). This consideration should be taken cautiously, since it seems likely that, at least to some extent, the diffusion of particular local forms of Ištar in Hittite local pantheons of central Anatolia was not (or not always) an “importation” of an originally foreign cult promoted by the court but rather a bottom-up process, through which particular female deities of Anatolian tradition (such as for instance the goddess defined as <sup>d</sup>MUNUS.LUGAL) were interpreted as local forms of Ištar (see F. G. Barsacchi, “Between adoption and assimilation: the case of Ištar of Ḫattarina”, 2023)

The third chapter of the book presents the philological edition of the ritual, which follows the editorial criteria adopted by the Hethitologie Portal Mainz in the online editions, with a broad transcription organized in syntactical units, followed by a transliteration of the respective text passages. Each section is followed by an English translation, and an extended translation is provided at the end of the chapter, allowing a clearer understanding of the development of the ritual. The philological edition is up to the highest standards. I have personally checked selected passages of the text and I have failed to find any significant errors. The retrieval of new fragments has made it possible for the author to amend some difficult or unclear passages of the text, such as, for instance, in line 223 (p. 79), where the reading *gimri* provided by manuscript KBo 51.289 has enabled the scribal mistake *é-ri* of manuscript B to be amended, thereby allowing for a much clearer understanding of the entire last section of the ritual. The work under review represents, therefore, a significant improvement with respect to Otten’s edition.

The text edition is followed, in chapter 4, by a detailed philological commentary, where all relevant linguistic and semantic issues are extensively analyzed. While commenting on line 95, the author interestingly proposes to identify the deity Pidenḫi (generally associated with the goddess Šalaš) mentioned at the end of tablet B (II 30) with Ištar, mentioned soon after (II 36). In this case, he writes: “the (...) problem emerges that the iconography of the nude goddess is characteristic of Šalaš / Pidenḫi but not of Ištar” (pp. 110–111). I see no problem with that, considering that this motif is well attested also in the Hurro-Hittite mythological tradition represented by the so-called Kumarbi cycle. Trameri identifies a possible background for such a depiction of the goddess in the Akkadian myth of Ištar’s descent to the Netherworld, which is certainly possible, but he apparently forgets a much closer parallel, represented by the Hurro-Hittite song of Hedammu (CTH 348), where Ištar removes her clothes in front of the Sea monster generated by Kumarbi in order to seduce the creature. The motif is widely spread across eastern Anatolia, if we consider that, on the bowl of Hasanlu (ca. 11th century BCE, Ištar / Šawuška is depicted on two rams, exposing her nude body. This would show (if we accept the interpretation by E. Porada (1965), *The Art of Ancient Iran*, 97–101) the persistence of such a mythical motif in the east until the beginning of the first millennium. The real problem that remains unsolved relates to the identification between Pidenḫi and Ištar, who, to my knowledge, are never associated in Hittite sources. Even more so, if we consider the reading *GAŠAN-li* in IBoT 2.128 (p. 112), which would suggest that the scribe is referring to an Anatolian divinity such as Anzili, who in this ritual would be equated with a deity of clear Hurrian origin such as Pidenḫi. The problem deserves a deeper study which goes beyond the scope of the book.

A lexical note is also in order: in his commentary, the author cautiously avoids translating the debated term *taršanzepe-*, mentioned in line 154 of the text edition (p. 68). In the final glossary, the lemma is generically defined as an “object of furniture and / or

structural element in a building” (p. 191). In a dedicated article, S. de Martino (“La funzione del *tarsa(n)zipa* nelle cerimonie culturali ittite”, *Hethitica* 5 (1983) 75–94), persuasively argued that the word indicates some kind of removable divider, used to separate the innermost space of the house or temple, where the hearth was probably located, from the entrance. In the case of the ritual in question, the *taršanzepa-* seems to be used to separate the entrance of the house from the ritual setting prepared by the practitioner, where the clay figurines of the Netherworld deities are placed, probably close to the earth. As underlined by A. Mouton (2015), “In order to avoid the profanation of consecrated elements, space must be separated into two parts: (1) a space, ritual or not, into which everyone is admitted; (2) a space that is taboo, in this case a space to which access is prohibited to almost everyone. The Hittite religious texts make brief allusions to such a compartmentalization of space: curtains are drawn during certain key moments of ceremonies; doors are closed or even sealed to separate the consecrated element from the environment of its origin” (p. 56). I believe that the use of the *taršanzepa-* in CTH 446 must be understood in this light.

The philological edition is followed by three chapters where the author analyzes the text and its composition process, in the broader context represented by Hittite ritual tradition, elaborating on some concepts already expressed in the second chapter. Ch. 4, in the words of the author, has two main goals: “the first is to contextualize content and formal components of the text in the broader horizon of the Hittite ritual corpus (...), the second (...) is to verify to what extent the contents of CTH 446 have affinities and / or divergences with the rest of the corpus” (p. 131). In the first two sections (4.1 and 4.2), he identifies interesting elements of comparison between the text under analysis and other Hittite purification rituals, such as the role played by the Ancient Gods and the presence of fictional dialogues between deities and natural elements, such as mountains or springs. Far from being just literary elaborations, these elements have a precise practical function and aim to increase the effectiveness of the ritual.

In paragraph 4.3, CTH 446 is placed against the background of the Hittite purification rituals performed for specific buildings that have somehow been contaminated. To the examples of rituals proposed, KBo 17.78 (CTH 652) could have been added. This is a ritual performed by the “man of the Storm-god” when a man dies during a thunderstorm (struck by lightning?). Even this text, unfortunately very fragmentarily preserved, is structured as a particular purification ritual of a building, since the text specifies the different operations to be conducted if the person struck by the Storm-god is inside or outside a house.

In paragraph 4.4, centered on the symbology of blood, the author presents some examples of rituals where blood plays a significant role. In the discussion (where I am missing a reference to I. Feder (2011), *Blood Expiation in Hittite and Biblical Ritual. Origins, Context, and Meaning*), more emphasis should have been given to the fact, pointed out by A. Mouton (2015, 64), that what is considered impure in some cultural contexts can be used in other contexts with a purifying purpose. This is particularly true in the case of some rituals from Kizzuwatna, where animal blood is used as a consecrating element, which the author is aware of (p. 143), even if he chooses not to dwell on this aspect.

Paragraph 4.5 is dedicated to the narrative sections of mythological content present in the ritual under analysis, such as the interesting reference (in line 210 of the text edition) to the mythological episode of the banishment of the Ancient Gods to the Netherworld by the Storm-god in the so-called “Song of the Beginning” (CTH 344). The author convincingly shows how the interaction between ritual practice and mythological narratives is typical of the Hittite tradition and represents an element that CTH 446 shares with other Hittite compositions.

All these considerations lead to the last two chapters, where the author addresses the debated question of whether the ritual in CTH 446 is an autonomous composition or it represents the product of a scribal compilation made on the basis of other, already existing, rituals, as suggested by some authors (G. Wilhelm 1999; J. Miller 2008). This would explain some of the internal inconsistencies in the development of the ritual. Based on his analysis, the author reaches the conclusion that it is entirely possible that the document, where traces of editorial activity by the scribe are certainly present, constitutes an editorial synthesis based on pre-existing documents. However, this does not preclude either the originality of the ritual, which represents “a new coherent ritual performance” that “surpasses” the individual character of its models” (154), or the intent of the composition, which had to be eminently practical. In this sense, as the author rightly underlines in the sixth and last chapter, the ritual cannot be interpreted as a purely literary product, and I agree entirely with this view. Despite the presence of narrative elements and an unquestionable degree of structural and formal elaboration, the Hittite rituals should not be detached from their practical function, representing an administrative product created through a complex work of synthesis and re-elaboration of various elements with the ultimate goal of creating the most effective tool for dealing with different critical situations. That considered, I wonder whether a more general title, along the lines of the one adopted by Laroche in his *Catalogue*, “Rituel aux divinités infernales: purification d’une maison”, would have been more appropriate for the book (even though possibly less captivating). It is certainly true that blood has an important role in the ritual procedure described in CTH 446, but in no place is it explicitly mentioned as the main cause of the impurity that has polluted the house. The fact that several possible causes are given for the impurity could well be explained by the fact that the document was seen as reference material for future consultation and was, therefore, conceived in order to be adapted to various circumstances.

Trameri has provided the scholarly community with a solid and updated edition of an important ritual text, which both builds on and expands the current debate on the use and function of the Hittite documents found in the text deposits of Hattuša / Boğazköy. For the accuracy of the philological work on the text and the breadth of the proposed considerations, the work represents a significant contribution to current studies on Hittite religion.

Università degli Studi di Torino  
Dipartimento di Studi Storici  
Via Sant’Ottavio, 20  
10124 Torino, Italia

Francesco G. Barsacchi  
francescogiuseppe.barsacchi@unito.it

Marco RAMAZZOTTI (ed.), *The Historical and Cultural Memory of Babylon: Collecting Fragments from the ‘Centre of the World’*. ARATTA, 2. Turnhout, Brepols, 2022. viii–193 p. 21.60 × 28.00. €75.00.

In recent years, there has been renewed interest in the afterlife of the city of Babylon. While most studies have sought to trace the diachronic development of Babylon’s legacy in a particular cultural tradition (the West, the Islamic Near East, etc.), the volume under review seeks to examine the city’s legacy through a series of ‘fragments’ from a range of contexts. While this necessarily means the various entries can only provide