Economy of Religions in Anatolia: From the Early Second to the Middle of the First Millennium BCE

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Economy of Religions in Anatolia: From the Early Second to the Middle of the First Millennium BCE

Proceedings of an International Conference in Bonn
(23rd to 25th May 2018)

Herausgegeben von

Manfred Hutter & Sylvia Hutter-Braunsar

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Thoroughly refereed

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An "Economical" Oracular Procedure

Evidence from the Hittite KIN Oracle

Livio Warbinek

According to the economic rule that "time is money", the present study concerns some economical features of the symbolic KIN oracle, which was the main topic of my PhD thesis.[1] Although there are only few sources concerning the economical elements of an oracle, the analysis of certain texts as case studies seems to suggest that inside Hittite oracles the KIN could be more easily and quickly performed. Therefore, the main aim of this study is to underline the KIN as the most cost-effective procedure in contrast to other Hittite oracles. To do this, some aspects of the KIN investigation will be reported in order to clarify its economical peculiarity taking into account both the "time" issue and "money" aspects.

1. Introduction

The following paper is concerned with the KIN[2] oracle, a symbolic[3] divination technique produced by the Hittites, and its possible economical features. Like other omens of the Ancient Near East, the Hittite oracles were considered to be messages from the gods.[4] The Hittite-solicited oracles included extispicy, augury, the "Bed" oracle, the "*ḪURRI*-bird" oracle, the "Snake" oracle and the KIN oracle.[5] Most of these oracular methods were imported from abroad (particularly from Mesopotamia and Syria), whereas others seem to have had local Anatolian origins.[6]

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[1] Title: "Il sistema mantico ittita KIN", Florence 2018. Supervisors: Prof. Dr. Giulia Torri and Prof. Dr. Joost Hazenbos. A published version in English is planned for the near future, some results from this study have already been published in Warbinek 2017. – I would like to thank also Prof. Dr. Giulia Torri who supported me throughout the KIN project and during the preparation of this paper. I also owe many thanks to Katy Mehran for her kind help and patience reading my drafts and to Prof. Dr. Gerfrid G. W. Müller for his courtesy in sharing with me the pictures of the Hethitologie-Portal Mainz (HPM).

[2] Among the main studies concerning the KIN oracle, Archi 1974 and Orlamünde 2001 must be mentioned.

[3] Beal 1992: 128: "I wonder if the traditional translation 'Los-Orakel' (Engl. 'lot oracle') should not be abandoned in order to avoid confusion with real lot oracles […]. I would suggest perhaps 'symbol oracle'."

[4] Beal 2001: 57.

[5] Archi 1974: 113; Beal 2001: 57-80; Hazenbos 2003: 4-6; Haas 2008: 17-65; Marcuson 2016: 97sq.

[6] Archi 1974: 131-134; 1975: 121; 1982: 279-283; 1991: 88sq.; Kammenhuber 1976: 10; Popko 1995: 82sq.; Beckman 1999: 530; Soysal 2000: 115sq.; Beal 1997: 207; 2001: 76; Hazenbos 2003: 8; Haas 2008: 19sq.; Taracha 2009: 145.

It can be argued that religions are always costly in terms of arranging festivals, providing materials, paying or covering living costs for religious specialists. If this is true for religious practice, then it is also true for oracles as a manifestation or practical character of religious beliefs.[7] In my opinion, there are two main features that can explain how and why the KIN oracle was a more economical procedure, i.e. cheaper and more convenient than other Hittite oracles, which can be related to "time" and "money" issues. However, before commencing with my argumentation, it is necessary to summarize the KIN oracle system.

1.1. KIN Oracle

The main scholarly contributions on the KIN oracle came from A. Archi (1974), J. Orlamünde (2001), J. Hazenbos (2003), V. Haas (2008) and H. Marcuson (2016). The first systematic study by Archi is still considered the basic approach to the topic. Archi recognized the symbolic structure and investigated the main KIN features according to the principal sources. Although subsequent studies drew attention to new KIN problems, producing a thorough analysis of some aspects of the KIN texts, much still remains to be understood about the practical execution of the KIN oracle.

The oracular interpretation of the KIN was up to the MUNUSŠU.GI "Old Woman" (Hittite ḫašawa-, "midwife"),[8] who also supervised Hittite birth rituals.[9] This female pre-eminence underscores the uniqueness of the KIN system, given that among the Hittite oracles only in the KIN a female practitioner did oversee oracular operations.[10] In this respect, the KIN system was based on symbolic operations that depended on local and grammatical positions of the oracular symbols.[11] The usual frame for every single oracular movement was constructed by symbolic *agens*, which took a passive symbol (or more) and put it (or them) to another one. Although there are many entities that could form part of a KIN operation, the symbolic group does not seem to be open to everything.[12] These movements could have occurred one, two, three or even four times in a single oracle, but usually a KIN oracle consisted of three actions. The first was never

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[7] Beal 2002: 11.

[8] To date, the correspondence between Hittite ḫāšawa- "midwife" and Sumerian MUNUSŠU.GI "Old Woman", proposed by Otten 1952: 233sq., and the exact scope in terms of the rituals and oracles of these characters are not clear. See Bin-Nun 1975: 121sq.; Kammenhuber 1976: 119, 127; Benedetti 1980: 94, 104-106; Pecchioli Daddi 1982: 580-590; Beckman 1983: 232-235; Haas / Wegner 1988: 1sq.; Beal 2001: 76; Haas 2003: 16-18; 2008: 20; Beckman 2016: 51; Marcuson 2016: 17, 410-413.

[9] See Pecchioli Daddi 1982: 581-590; Kammenhuber 1976: 119-129; Frantz-Szabó 1995: 2009; Popko 1995: 82sq.; Hazenbos 2003: 8; Haas 2008: 20; Beckman 2016: 52sq.; Marcuson 2016: 176. The Old Woman took part in the celebration of the festival (Marcuson 2016: 83-95) and funeral rituals (Bin-Nun 1975: 123sq.).

[10] Beal 2001: 76.

[11] Archi 1974: 115; Hazenbos 2003: 9.

[12] Archi 1974: 116. Particularly, see the lists of KIN symbols in Archi 1974: 134-144; Ünal / Kammenhuber 1974: 161sq.; Orlamünde 2001: 303-305; Beal 2001: 77sq.; Marcuson 2016: 116-120.

marked, whereas the second and the third may have been introduced with a temporal expression, in most cases by means of *INA* UD 2/3[KAM] "on the second / third day".[13] This is the reason why Popko wrote: "according to the texts, each oracle took much time with just one stage of the divination lasting a day".[14] Conversely, my opinion is exactly the opposite due to the fact that there were different ways to introduce an operation:

> *INA* UD 2 / 3[KAM]   "on the second / third day"
> 2 / 3-*ŠU / -ŠÚ*   "second / third"
> 2 / 3-*NU / -NÚ*   "second / third (time)" (Akkadian *ŠANÛ*)
> simply with the numbers: "2, 3"
> Lastly, where there was a fourth action, it was introduced with 4 *urkiš* "the fourth trace".

As Archi had already noticed,[15] all of these formulas were a written *escamotage* to introduce the actions rather than real temporal markers, as the literal sense "on the second day" may imply.[16] This assertion is simply proved by the presence of the other timing expressions (above) to mark the KIN operations without that anything can change in the oracle. For this reason, it seems evident that the KIN oracle did not last for long; rather I believe it was a quick procedure according to the oracular contexts (available from the question or the introduction to the text), i.e. when and why an oracle was or had been requested. Even though in most cases the context is not always clear, due to the conservation status of the tablets, there are some sources where the context can be useful to figure out the oracle timing. Particularly, the urgency of an oracle is clear in the sources reporting only KIN oracles (that is, for the most part, texts of CTH 572). On the other hand, sources including KIN and other different oracular methods (CTH 577, 578, 580, 582) are in no particular hurry to find a quick answer.

2. Timing

To introduce the time issue, it is appropriate to start with a paragraph from KUB 22.37 where a new appointee is selected according to god's approval:[17]

> KUB 22.37 i 6'-10'
> 6' *nu-za* ᵐ*Ku-wa-ar-wa-šu-ˋun*ˋ {x} *ti-it-ta-nu-zi*
> 7' *IŠ-ˋTU*ˋ DINGIR^*LIM* *a-pa-a-aš ma-la-an-za nu* KIN SIG₅-*ru*
> 8' ᴰUTU AN^*E* GUB-*iš* MU^ḪI.A GÍD.DA TI-*tar* PAP-*nu-mar*
> 9' ᴰ*Gul-˳ša˳-aš mi-nu-mar da-pí-an* ZI-*an* É-*ya* ME-*aš*
> 10' *nu-kán an-da* ḪUL-*u-i* NU.SIG₅

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[13] Archi 1974: 120sq.; Orlamünde 2001: 301 with fn. 36; Marcuson 2016: 111sq.
[14] Popko 1995: 138.
[15] Archi 1974: 120sq.: "Certamente però non bisogna intendere che per ogni movimento occorresse un giorno, altrimenti non sarebbe bastato un mese per un'indagine quale quella contenuta in KUB V 4 + XVIII 53".
[16] Warbinek 2017: 113 fn. 19.
[17] Beal 2002: 32; Goedegebuure 2014: 388; Marcuson 2016: 479sq.

He will install Kuwarwašu. Is he approved by the deity? Let the KIN be favourable. The Sun-God of heaven arose, took the long years, the life, protection, the goodwill of the fate-goddess, the whole soul, and the house; into evil. Unfavourable.[18]

From the point of view of timing, two main queries arise in this text, i.e. whether this royal installation was an urgent need, and whether the king needed a quick answer to it. It seems difficult to investigate this further, but these questions are useful in order to focus the analysis. There is, for example, a branch of oracular sources referring to military events, where a quick answer was extremely important. To carry on and to lead the war, the Hittite king was in need of urgent oracles and urgent answers. Above all, I find it extremely interesting that, in such cases regarding military operations, the vast majority of the oracles are KIN rather than other oracular techniques.

2.1. Haste: KUB 22.25+

The main example of this peculiarity is KUB 22.25+, which concerns military operations against the Kaskean army:[19]

> KUB 22.25 + 50.55 i 18'-22'
> 18' *UL nam-ma pa-iz-zi nu* GIM-*an* ^{URU}*Ḫa-ti-en-zu-wa*[20] *a-ri*
> 19' *nu I-NA* ^{URU}*Ne-ri-ik an-da pa-iz-zi nu* URU-*an ú-e-te-ez-zi pa-ra-a-ma-za-kán*
> 20' ^{URU}*Ne-ri-ik-ka₄-az ar-ḫa a-ri-ya-mi ma-a-an ku-ru-ur*$^{ḪI.A}$ **ḫu-u-da-ak** RA-*mi*
> 21' *m[a]-a-an-za* EZEN₄ *wuᵤ-ru-ul-li-ya-aš* **ḫu-u-da-ak** DÙ-*mi* DINGIR^{LUM} *ar-ha ú-da-aḫ-ḫi*
> 22' *ma-a-an-ma-za* DINGIR^{LUM} KI.MIN *nu* KIN SIG₅-*ru* […]
> (…) he will not go further. Then, when he arrives in the town of Hatinzuwa, he will go in Nerik and rebuild the city. But again in Nerik I will question the oracle: whether I will have to attack immediately the enemies or I will have to celebrate immediately the *purulli*-fest bringing out the deity. If for the deity ditto, so let the KIN be favourable!

There are two main considerations regarding this text. First, there are only KIN oracles for each question to solve and, more importantly, there is the recurring presence of the word *ḫudāk* "straightaway, immediately, suddenly", e.g. l. 20': "If I will **immediately** engage the enemies".[21] In my opinion, this shows us how the historical context and the oracle were contemporary with each other; thus, the Hittite king was in need of urgent oracular answers.

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[18] Marcuson 2016: 480.
[19] von Schuler 1965: 176sq.; Lamante 2009: 384, 388.
[20] Not far away from Nerik, see del Monte / Tischler 1978: 102sq.; del Monte 1992: 36.
[21] Kloekhorst 2008: 365; similar obv. 33', [46'sq.]; rev. [8]-9, 16-[17], 27, 34sq.

2.2. Haste: KUB 5.4+

The war context[22] of KUB 5.4+ represents another situation where the king seemed to be in haste. In this case, since the king's campaign had gone on long enough and winter was coming, he had to know where to camp during the winter period with the army and what this could have implied (e.g. with possible revolts in Ḫattuša in the absence of the king, i 26-36). In other words, the purpose of the oracle was "to assure the safety of the king while he is cooped up through the cold central Anatolian winter, by discovering **ahead of time** any problems that the gods foresee arising".[23]

In this source, the primary oracular method is again the KIN oracle; but, in the parallel version KUB 5.3+, there are also *exta* oracles.[24] The king's haste in seeking urgent answers seems more vague here. The KIN oracle is prevalent but not unique, while the urgency seems pressing in terms of future choices.

2.3. No haste: KBo 2.2 and IBoT 1.32

On the contrary, i.e. in the oracular tablets with a combination of different oracular techniques (KIN, extispicy, ornithomancy, *ḪURRI*-bird oracle, snake oracle), we can prudently arraign *argumenta a contrario*, because in these sources the situation looks completely different:

> KBo 2.2 i 1-17
> (1-4) As long as His Majesty (will be) within the country of Nerik until he comes up (home), if the fever will not befall His Majesty, then let the exta be favourable; unfavorable.
> (5-8) Concerning the fever which was ascertained for His Majesty: As long as he (will be) there within the country of Nerik, will the fever befall him there? Then let the *ḫurri*-bird be unfavourable; unfavourable.
> (9-11) Through the "Old Woman" that same question: Let the KIN be unfavourable. The Small Illness took Country and Year and gave it to the *panku*; unfavourable.
> (30-33) Concerning the fever which was ascertained for His Majesty: **(Will it be) before** he will sit down in kingship? Then let the *ḫurri*-bird be unfavourable. Unfavourable.[25]

The possible fever (*tapašša*-) of the king was a serious problem to take into account, but it was not an urgent issue. It belonged to the future and was not an immediate emergency for the current situation, as seen above. Even more illuminating is another passage from the same text:

> KBo 2.2 ii 7-14

> 7 *ma-a-an-kán pí-ra-an-˙ma˙⁾?*
> 8 *la-aḫ-la-aḫ-ḫe-eš-ga-u[-e-   -]ni*

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[22] Beal 1997.
[23] Beal 1997: 207.
[24] Beal 1997: 207.
[25] van den Hout 1998: 125-127.

9   *nu e-ni ut-tar a-pí-y*[*a*   ]*x-ša-ni* [?]
10 *nam-ma-ma* DINGIR*ᴸᵁᴹ A-NA* ᴰUTU*ˢ̌ᴵ*
11 *dam-ma-in* :*ta-pa-aš-ša-an*
12 *Ú-UL ku-in-ki uš-ki-ši*
13 *ku-it-ma-na-aš-kán INA* ᵁᴿᵁḪat-ti še-ˈerˋ
14 *nu TE*ᴹᴱ·ᴱˢ̌ SIG₅-*ru* ᴳᴵˢ̌ŠÚ.A-ḫi ˈGÙBˋ-*an* NU.SIG₅

Since in advance we keep worrying, (will) that matter the[n/ther[e …] …
but do you further, o god, for His Majesty do not see some other fever as long
as he (will be) up in Ḫatti-land? Then let the *exta* be favourable. The throne
(is) on the left; unfavourable.[26]

According to the source, the oracles here did not have the special character of
haste present in the situations typical of war contexts. Rather, the solution can be
found by means of different oracular methods with long and accurate (and not so
rapid) oracular consultations, because the problem concerns an unknown future,
without an immediate urgency.

However, it is necessary to underline that the war context is not the main ele-
ment to cause the haste in an oracle. The hurry always depends on the single con-
text. Therefore, there are also military oracular texts where time plays any role, as
we can see in the following example:

IBoT 1.32 i 1-12
(1-2) Will the Majesty this year [in the la]nd of Azzi (on campaign) go (*lit.*:
come)? [(For) the Go]ds of the city of Kummann[i], let (the oracle) be
favourable! (*follows* KIN *oracle*)
(4) The same question through the Augur: the birds shall determine (the
outcome)! (*follows ornithomancy*)
(11) Should Šauška-Runtiya in the land of Azzi come? Let (the oracle) [be
favour]able![27] (KIN *oracle follows*)

The military context "this year" (l. 1) actually concerns the next year, specifically
spring to summer, when the next campaign will be led. Nevertheless, as Camma-
rosano / Marizza noted:[28] "Die Tafel IBoT 1.32, deren Edition hier in Abschnitt
5 gegeben wird, enthält den Bericht über eine Orakelbefragung im Zusammen-
hang mit einer möglichen Militärkampagne in das ostanatolische Land Azzi. Der
Feststellung des Feldzuges in das Land Azzi folgend (Vs. 1-11), wendet sich die
Befragung ab Z. 12 der Auswahl der in den Feldzug zu schickenden Komman-
danten zu, wobei die Möglichkeit erwogen wird, entweder einen Würdenträger
mit Namen Šauška-Runtiya (Vs. 11-13) oder den König von Tumanna (Vs. 14-
16) […] zu schicken." The military campaign is *possible*, not sure, and for this
reason it is not urgent to question the oracles. The Hittites had time to set up KIN
and other oracular methods.

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[26] van den Hout 1998: 128sq.
[27] Cammarosano / Marizza 2015: 186sq.
[28] Cammarosano / Marizza 2015: 164. For Šauška-Runtiya cf. Cammarosano / Marizza
2015: 165sq. with notes 35sq.: "Prince of Tarḫuntašša", MAGNUS.DOMUS.FILIUS,
MAGNUS.SCRIBA and military commander.

The same situation also appears in other oracular tablets since the choice of battlefield or land to occupy is always subjected to divine approval, as the following example shows:

> KBo 22.264 i 1'-3', 14'-16':[29]
> x+1 *A-NA* ᴰUTU*ŠI la-aḫ-ḫi-ya-tar* DINGIR*LUM ke-e-da-ni* MU-*ti*
> 2' ZAG KUR *Túr-mi-it-ta*[30] *ma-la-a-an ḫar-ti*
> 3' *nu* KIN SIG₅-*ru*
>   (KIN *oracle follows*)
>
> ────────────────────────────────
>
> (8'-13' *extispicio*)
>
> ────────────────────────────────
>
> 14' *nu-kán* DINGIR*LUM A-NA* ᴰUTU*ŠI la-aḫ-ḫi-ya-tar*
> 15' *ke-e-da-ni* MU-*ti* ZAG KUR *Ne-ri-ik-ma*[31]
> 16' *ma-la-a-an ḫar-ti nu* KIN SIG₅-*ru*
>   (KIN *oracle follows*)
>
> ────────────────────────────────

(1'-3') Have you, O God, granted the campaign of His Majesty in the district of the land of Durmitta in this year? Let the KIN be favorable!
(14'-16') Have you, O God, granted the campaign of His Majesty in the district of the land of Nerik in this year? Let the KIN be favorable![32]

3. Oracular Letters

In addition, the question of timing concerns also another genre, i.e. oracle reports in letters. In particular, we have two Hittite letters reporting on KIN oracles, KBo 18.142 and KuT 49, which might be useful when investigating this topic further.

3.1. Letter KBo 18.142

KBo 18.142 is a KIN letter with the oracular question and the context on the obverse, i.e., the queen saw in a dream a possible sorcery action against the wife of Ḫarranaziti (obv. 1-4), whereas the performances and the result of the oracle are on the reverse:[33]

> KBo 18.142
> 1 UḪ₇-*za-kán ku-in*
> 2 Ù MUNUS.LUGAL
> 3 *A-NA* DAM ᵐTI₈ᴹᵁŠᴱᴺ.LÚ[34]
> 4 *an-da I-MUR*
> 5 [*n*]*a-at-ši ma-a-an*
> 6 [S]AG.DU-*aš* ÚŠ-*an*
> 7 *nu* KIN NU.SIG₅-*du*

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[29] Heinhold-Krahmer 1988: 101sq.; Beal 2002: 32; Sakuma 2008: 296sq.
[30] del Monte 1992: 175.
[31] del Monte 1992: 114.
[32] Sakuma 2008: 296sq.
[33] Cf. Mouton 2007a: 220sq.; 2007b.
[34] Laroche 1981, Nr. 1733. See also Imparati 1999: 171 with fn. 39.

Rev.

8 ᴰUTU AN-*E* GUB-*iš*

9 *ŠA* DAM ᵐʳTI₈ʾᴹᵁŠᴱᴺ.LÚ ZAG-*tar* ME-*aš*

10 *na-at pa-ˊanˋ-ga-u-i pa-iš*

11 *INA* U₄.2.KAM SIG₅-*u-an-za* ZALAG.GA-*an* ME[-*aš*]

12 *na-an* ⁽ᴰ⁾MAḪ-*ni pa-iš*

13 *INA* U₄.3.KAM ᴰU GUB-*iš*

14 MU.KAM-*an* ME-*aš*

15 *nu-kán* ᴰ*gul-še*

16 *da-pí-i* ZI-*ni* SIG₅

(1-6) The sorcery that the Queen saw in a dream for the wife of Ḫarranaziti, [and] for her (the wife): if that means death for her person, so let the KIN be favourable!

(8-16) The Sungod of Heaven arose, he took the Rightness of the wife of Ḫarranaziti, and gave to the Congregation. On the second day, the Goodness to[ok] for itself the Light and gave (it) to the Mother <Goddess>. On the third day, the Stormgod arose, took the Year and (gave it) to the Fate-goddesses, to the Whole Soul. Favourable.[35]

The difference becomes even clearer by looking at the clay tablet itself:[36]

KBo 18.142: Obv.   Rev.

According to Soysal "the same scribe probably wrote both sides of the tablet", but "the oracular question was first inscribed on a tablet, then the oracle performances and results were added as a continuation of the text. When the tablet was concluded, the tablet was baked"[37]. Furthermore and more important "in these tablets, the passages with the oracular questions were set down in conventional handwriting; however, the parts which contain the divination performances were carelessly written, due to the stress involved in recording the procedures with haste"[38]. I completely agree with this point, but it implies a new question: Was this haste

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[35] Mouton 2007a: 220sq.

[36] Berman 1982: 94 fn. 5; Soysal 2000: 87-89. For the Photos see http://www.hethport.adw-mainz.de/fotarch/bildausw.phd?n=39/w&b=+B1116a+B1133e+B1154a+B1161d+B1178f (courtesy of Hethitologie-Portal Mainz / HPM).

[37] Soysal 2000: 88.

[38] Soysal 2000: 88.

caused by the KIN oracle, or by it being rewritten? I think it is difficult to find a possible solution for now, but what I would like to highlight is that, probably in a haste case, Hittites chose the KIN as the better and faster oracular option.

3.2. Letter KuT 49 (Ku 97/21)

KuT 49 is a letter with a middle-Hittite ductus written by a "(civic) governor" LÚ*ḪAZANNU* to his lord, "Chief of the Employees of the Palace" GAL DUMU^MEŠ É.GAL, to report to him on the oracles regarding the "Person of the son of the priestess" SAG.DU DUMU ^MUNUS^SANGA:[39]

> KuT 49
>
> (3-6) [^f]´*Ya*ʾ*-aš-mu* ^MUNUS^ŠU.GI *ki-iš-ša*ʾ*-an me-e-mi-iš-ta* ´*A-NA*ʾ SAG.DU DUMU ^MUNUS^SANGA-*wa u-ur-ke-e-eš i-da-a-la-u-eš-ki-it-ta nu-wa ke-e u-ur-ke-e-eš ki-i-ša-an-da-ti*
>
> ---
>
> (7-10) *i-da-lu-wa da-a-an nu-wa-ra-at-kán* {aš} EGIR-*pa* ^D^*Ḫal-ma-aš-*´*šu*ʾ*-it-ta nu-w[a] ut-tar ar-ḫa* IV-*ŠU a-ri-ya-nu-un nu-wa-ra-at* IV-*ŠU-pát i-da-a-la-u-eš-ta nu a-pí-ya-i-ya ar-ḫa a-ri-ya-an-du*
>
> ---
>
> (11-14) *nu ú-wa-u-e-en IŠ-TU* MUŠEN^ḪI.A *nam-ma ar-ḫa ki-iš-ša-an a-ri-ya-u-en ki-i-wa* ^f^*I-ya-aš ku-it ki-iš-ša-an me-e-mi-iš-ta A-NA* SAG DUMU ^MUNUS^SANGA-*wa na-*´*a*ʾ*-ḫu-wa-ni ḫa-an-da-a-na-at*
>
> ---
>
> (3-6) The Old Woman Iya said to me as follows: "For the person of the son of the priestess(?) the traces (i.e. oracular signs) were bad, und these traces have (in this way) arisen:
> (7-10) The evil is taken, and it is given back to the Throne Goddess. I have thoroughly investigated this for four times through the oracle (KIN), and for four times it has got worse. And also there one should question the oracle thoroughly!"
> (11-14) So we set out to question the oracle through birds as follows. (With regard) to that, Iya spoke in this way: "Should we fear the person of the son of the priestess?" It has been determined.[40]

There is no KIN question (obv. 4-6), so the context of the KIN oracle appears unclear. However, maybe that question could have been the same as, or similar to, the next one in the Augury.[41] The interesting point here is the use of the KIN plus the Augury oracles. The KIN has been made four times (obv. 8sq., hoping for a favourable answer?), whereas the Augury has only been made twice (obv. 15-21, 25-32). Is it possible that the KIN procedure was twice as fast as the Augury? Once again, there is no definitive evidence of a *ratio* between two different oracular techniques. Nevertheless, it is possible that bird watching needed more time than KIN operations when both the time to manage the sacred observing

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[39] Wilhelm 1998: 176-180; cf. Pecchioli Daddi 1982: 449sq., 529-535.
[40] Wilhelm 1998: 178sq.
[41] Obv. 13sq., 23sq.; Wilhelm 1998: 177; van den Hout 2001: 430.

place and the time to wait for the required bird flights are taken into account. Finally, since the KIN oracle was primarily verified not only by MUŠEN-oracles but also by SU-*exta* (CTH 577, 578, 579, 580), is this time disparity also valid for *exta* oracles? This question allows me to move onto the money issue.

4. "Money"

As the Ancient Near Eastern societies were pre-monetary societies, we need to define the word "money" itself. Money delineates something that can be or was used to pay, be it prestigious goods, a kind of currency, or rations for workers. Considering this approach, the money issue could be generalized as a problem of "expense".

Firstly, as far as the KIN oracle is concerned, it is necessary to state that there is no direct information about money. However, it is possible to reflect on oracular costs, because, like any religious ceremony, oracles were always costly in arranging the oracular operations, providing the oracular material, and covering the living costs of the specialist. Starting with the latter point, there was, almost certainly, a sort of salary to pay the [MUNUS]ŠU.GI for her oracular service, but I have found neither elements nor marks in KIN sources concerning a possible Old Woman's payment.

On the other hand, it is possible to say something about operations and materials. According to Orlamünde, and following the archaeological interpretation of some "Schalensteine" and "Schalenfelsen"[42] found at Ḫattuša, one of the most interesting theories concerning the oracle performance hints at the possibility that oracular operations were performed through the use of small "figures" or "pawns", i.e. symbols on a sort of chessboard.[43] This hypothesis can be supported and strengthened according to both epigraphical and archaeological sources of lot oracle systems and cleromancy in the Mediterranean Basin,[44] from ancient Italian lots[45] to the Israeli stones Urim and Tummim.[46] The wide diffusion of cleromantic practices is one of the elements supporting the chessboard theory for KIN. Limited to Anatolia, there are many examples of divination procedures of the first millennium BCE through *astragaloi*, dice or *sortes* of various kinds, launched in stone basins with squares or holes: the oracles of Anabura and Tefenni in Phrygia, of Antiochia ad Cragum in Cilicia, of Antalya in Pamphylia, and of Termesson in Pisidia represent some of these examples.[47] Moreover, most of these oracles tend to be composed of "many different variations on 'do it' and 'don't do it'"[48], as

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[42] Neve 1977-78; 1996.

[43] Orlamünde 2001: 310: "[…] als eine Art von Setzsteinen auf einem Spielbrett"; cf. Orlamünde 2001: 310sq. with notes 81-91. The first to propose this hypothesis was Riemschneider 1971, followed *inter alia* by Ünal / Kammenhuber 1974: 162, 172; Haas 2008: 20-22; Frantz-Szabó 1995: 2016; Beckman 1999: 530; 2016: 53. Conversely, see Archi 1974: 130sq. and Haas / Wegner 1996: 107.

[44] Stoneman 2011: 133-144.

[45] Buchholz 2013.

[46] Lindblom 1962.

[47] Curnow 2004: 124-151.

[48] Curnow 2004: 151.

well as the KIN answer could always be "favourable" (SIG$_5$) or "not favourable" (NU.SIG$_5$).

This hypothesis could imply an interpretation of the KIN oracular movements on an oracular board without involving real costs for everyday materials. In this respect, the KIN could work on a low-cost basis compared to other oracle procedures. To understand this clearly, a comparison between KIN and extispicy can be useful.

4.1. KUB 22.70

The tablet KUB 22.70 is an oracle text "über die Intrigen am hethitischen Hof",[49] as defined by Ünal, where His Majesty (probably Tutḫaliya IV) became ill because of the anger of the deity of the town of Arušna. In this regard Beal noted:[50] "Note that the cost of the damages that the king had to pay to the god was not extravagant. The big expenditure was the twofold compensation / damages for the precious statuary ornaments that had been made for the god but sent instead for the queen's statue. For all other infractions, aside from making good the misdeed, the punishment was only a gold star weighing two shekels, a silver tankard weighing 4 shekels, 5 sets of *takkisra*-garments, 1 cape, and 1 woman's *kappeni*-garment, one white Hurrian style shirt set, one white *massiya*-garment, one white *gapari*-garment, one [...]-garment set, one white long cloak set, one white [...]-garment set, one *marusamme*-Hurrian style shirt set, one *marusamme*-twined-garment set, one set of *marusamme*-leggings, and four sacrificed sheep, and crying 'O woe'. [...] Of course, one must take into consideration the cost of the 32 odd sheep required to perform the oracle of this text alone, not counting the cost in sheep of determining which of the thousand gods was angry to start with." Beal's point is even more interesting because the oracles performed in KUB 22.70 are not KIN oracles, but extispicy (KUŠ^{MEŠ}) and *ḪURRI*-bird (MUŠEN *ḪURRI*) oracles. Thus, it can be argued that, in the case of extispicy, in order to inspect the viscera, the Hittites had to slaughter a significant number of animals, whereas nothing so gory and expensive seems to be necessary for the KIN oracle. In my opinion, this is justified, because of the practical procedure of the KIN oracle, according to Orlamünde:[51] "Ein bedeutender Unterschied im Vergleich zu anderen Orakelarten besteht zudem darin, daß das KIN-Orakel eher einen spielerischen Charakter hatte. Zudem dürfte es nicht so kostenintensiv wie beispielsweise die SU-Orakel gewesen sein, die die Schlachtung einer großen Anzahl von Opfertieren erforderten."

5. Conclusion

As presented above, some oracular tablets can provide a different perspective on the Hittite oracular economy, even though there are evident limitations in the KIN oracular sources. First, there is a lack of material elements (except maybe for the KIN board game, i.e. the "Schalensteine") because neither symbolic pawns nor

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[49] Ünal 1978: 1-60; cf. Beckman 1997.
[50] Beal 2002: 19.
[51] Orlamünde 2001: 311.

tools have been found so far. Then, the lack of clear references prevents us from understanding the practical movements of KIN symbolism. Nevertheless, from my point of view, the KIN oracle was extremely advantageous and economical concerning the time and the expenses. In terms of time, because the KIN seems to be instantaneous in doing rather than waiting for bird flights; in terms of money, because the KIN only needed board pieces rather than more and more animals to be slaughtered. Furthermore, without limits or needs for animals or sacred observing places, the Old Women could probably ask and execute the oracle at every place, especially in the war context. Overall, for these reasons, I would like to emphasize that – in a haste situation – Hittites could have chosen the KIN as the more productive oracular solution in order to avoid wasting of time and resources.

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