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Did Urartian Šiwini Imitate Mesopotamian Šamaš?

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Abstract

Sun deities had sometimes the function of judgment during antiquity. Mesopotamian Šamaš and Urartian Šiwini are of similar examples. Their function as the Judge Deity was more significant than the sun function. Šamaš was the great sun in mythological texts but the judge in royal inscriptions. Šiwini is mentioned in ending and cursing formula of the royal inscriptions to punish the destructor and the enemy. He sometimes accompanied two other significant deities in Urartian Pantheon, Haldi and Teišeba. Šiwini had been exhibited and pictured as the winged disc or a horse which are both symbols of Šamaš as well. Accordingly, the similarities between Šamaš and Šiwini are doubtless. Simultaneously, they have differences as the way they are mentioned in inscriptions and Šiwini's third place in Urartian pantheon. It is the aim of the author to compare these two deities through reviewing the texts they are mentioned in to demonstrate the absolute effect of Šamaš over Šiwini and to refuse the exact imitation of Šiwini from Šamaš.

Keywords: Urartu; Šiwini; Šamaš; Mesopotamia

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Introduction

Local sun deities were praised in all over the ancient Near East in the courts and among the people (Grekyan, 2006: 173). Kassite Šuriaš (Black and Green, 1992: 112), Hittite Ištan or Eštan, Hurriani Šimigi (Leick, 2010: 44), Elamite Nahunte and Šamaš, Western Apolon, Iranian Mithra and Ugarit Goddess Šapaš were among the most significant Sun Deities. They are comparable to Sumerian UTU and Akkadian Šamaš (Bienkowski and Millard, 2000: 263-264). But, some were related to alliance, treaty and the promise and punished the renegers and unfaithfuls as Mithra (Pordavoud, 2015: MihrYasht). Akkadian Šamaš, Babilonian Marduk, and Light and Fire Deity Nusku were all in relation with judgment as well (Black and Green, 1992: 68, 128, 138, 173, 182-184). Of course, Šamaš was the supreme one in the sun, judgment, and justice functions. He travelled the sky through the day to witness the crimes. Šiwini as well was Sun Deity but at the same time he could punish the invaders and his position was high in the sky. His name is mostly mentioned in the ending and cursing formula in royal inscriptions. Even the cursing and punishing of Ḫaldi and Teišeba could only be accomplished under the sun.

Šiwini and the related function of sun and punishment in antiquity are less considered by the scholars. Urartians were affected by Assyrians in their culture and cuneiform writing system. Accordingly, it seems that Šiwini was an imitation of Šamaš. But Šiwini is not a direct imitation. It is the aim of the paper to introduce Assyrian and Urartian religions and to focus on the functions and comparison of Šamaš and Šiwini through the texts and inscriptions to determine the position of sun deities among Assyrians and

Urartians and to discuss their differences as well.

Assyrian and Urartian Religions

Mesopotamian deities are anthropomorphic (Binkowski and Millard, 2000: 131). The Mesopotamian religion is to be studied through the prayers, mythical and ritual texts, royal inscriptions, bass-reliefs, and objects.

Mesopotamian cult and pantheon affected others in the ancient Near East since the Sumerian era (Ibid: 132; Leick, 2010: 84). Furthermore, the destiny, cultivation, and fertility were of great importance for them (Black and Green, 1992: 69, 81). Goddesses were mostly the spouses of gods except for some supreme goddesses as Ištar. Animal symbols and weapons in Mesopotamia help the recognition of the deities (Bienkowski and Millard, 2000: 94).

We know much little about Urartian beliefs. They ruled over the area around Lakes Van, Sevan and Urmia from about 9th to 6th B.C.E (Zimansky, 1985: 12). They left royal inscriptions about their triumph and construction in this region (Salvini, 2008). There is a little piece of evidence about their beliefs and religion; the list of offerings in MherKapisi inscription (Ibid: A3-1), the trinity of deities mentioned in royal inscriptions, and some motifs on metalworks and bullae are among the most important references. The illustration of Urartian deities is rarely taken place and there are a few known symbols of their gods.

MherKapisi inscription includes a list of most important and respected deities together with the number of sacrifices to be offered to them. Urartian royal inscriptions generally start with the name of Ḫaldi, Supreme Deity of Urartian kings, usually

along with Teišeba, Weather Deity, and Šiwini, Sun Deity (Salvini, 2008). Haldi was not originally Urartian and Išpuini (*ca.* 830-820 B.C.E.) called this deity the supreme in Urartu (Ibid, 2010: 29).

Fertility was very challenging in the ancient world. Although there are many deities related to fertility in Urartu, including Haldi, Teišeba, and some goddesses, there is no specific deity with the function of fertility in Urartu. Goddesses are mainly the spouses of gods and not mother-goddesses or Fertility Deities.



Fig.1. (Kendall, 1977, fig. 14b)

Šamaš in Inscriptions

Sumerian UTU or Akkadian Šamaš was the most praised Sun Deity in the ancient Near East (Black and Green, 1992: 76). It was believed in Mesopotamia that Šamaš rises from his home in the morning from the east and passes the sky, sometimes with his chariot, through the day to go to the underworld in the evening in the west (Ibid: 52, 68, 128, 137-138, 173, 182-184).

Most of the oaths were taken place to Šamaš's name in Mesopotamia (Vallat, 1998: 335). Šamaš had the function of judgment and justice, although this not mentioned for UTU (Leick, 2010: 128). Šamaš witnessed everybody in his daily journey in the sky. He also was the deity of war (Black and Green, 1992: 68, 128, 138, 173, 182-184), oppressed people (Grey, 1999: 27), and prediction

(Luckenbill 1927: 364). He was the king of the sky and the earth (Black and Green, 1992: 36-37) and the enemy of the diseases and darkness. Additionally, Assyrian kings were the embodiment of Šamaš (Luckenbill, 1927).

Sumerian UTU was the son of Nana or Sin and his wife Ningal. He also was Innana's brother. But, Akkadian Šamaš was the son of an or Enlil. Šamaš's wife was the light and love goddess Šerida or Aya (Black and Green, 1992: 68, 182-184).

His symbol was the number of 20, a rod with two panther heads, the horse, the winged disc (Black and Green, 1992: 104) (Fig. 1), and a star with four rays (Ibid: 168).

Generally, symbols of Šamaš are illustrated over the kudurus, steles, and cylinder seals (Bienkowski and Millard, 2000: 205; Basmachi. 1975-1976:202). The winged disc is a challenging symbol in the ancient Near East but mostly the symbol of the sun (Cirlot, 197: 93). Reade (1977: 38) argues that Babylonians did not illustrate Šamaš as the winged disc but as a star with four beams of ray. Then, this star was replaced by the cross, sometimes inside a winged disc, in Assyria. It is believed that the winged disc was originated from Egypt and was exported to Syria, Hittite, and Mesopotamia (Black and Green 1992: 74).

The Mesopotamian Sun deity is usually mentioned with the function of the sun and not judgment in the myths, poems, and epics including "Lugalbnda" (Cramer, 2006: 184), "Enmarkar and the ruler of Artta kingdom" (Ibid: 180-181), "Etana" (Leick, 2010: 129), "Gilgamesh" (Ibid: 98-99), and "Flodmyth" (Ibid: 40), "Domozymyth" (Black and Green, 1992: 68, 128, 138, 173, 182-184).

Šamaš as Judgment and Justice Deity is mentioned in royal inscriptions, annals, and the cursings. Tiglet-Pileser I, Addad-Nirary

II, Tukulti-Ninurta II, Aššur-Nasirpal II, Šalmanesar III, Sargon, Esarheddon, and Aššur-Banipal declared him the judge of the sky and the earth (Luckenbill, 1926: 72, 107, 135, 174, 197, 200; Idem, 1927: 224, 380). Šamaš would ruin the destroyer in some cursings (Zaccagnini, 1993: 57, line 15). Šamaš punishes the destroyer of Sargon's constructions, statues, and law (Luckenbill, 1927: 65) as well as Esarheddon and Aššur-Banipal's heritage (Ibid: 372). He also has the main role in Hamurabi stele as the judge. This stele was kept in Šamaš temple in Sippar (Harper, Aruz and Tallon, 1993: 159-161). The inscription includes the praise to the deities who instructed Hamurabi to bring justice to his kingdom. He stands in front of Šamaš in the above illustration of the stele (Hinnells, 2007: "Hamurabi law"). The inscription contains the punishment for different crimes (Strommenger, 1964: 426). Now it is obvious that this stele is dedicated to Šamaš, the judgment deity, to observe the crimes and punishments.

Šamaš could bestow the power and triumph to the kings; Aššur-Nasirpal II mentions Šamaš as the great king, the supreme deity and the creator (Luckenbill, 1926: 171, 174, 200). This god was called for power in Anubanini's inscription (Negahban, 2011: 233). Many kings including Tukulti-Ninurta I, Aššur-Nasirpal II, Sargon, Sennakherib, and Esarheddon had built, offered, or reconstructed Šamaš temples (Luckenbill, 1926: 18, 24, 62, 167; Idem, 1927: 42, 63, 65, 69, 188, 261). Šamaš heard the demands of Tukulti-Ninurta I, Aššur-dan II, Aššur-Nasirpal II (Ibid: 25, 59, 108, 193). This deity had made Addad-Nirary (Idem 1926: 27), Tukulti-Ninurta I (Ibid: 56), Tiglat-Pileser I (Ibid: 82), Aššur-Nasirpal II (Ibid: 184), Addad-Nirary III (Ibid: 261, 263), Sargon, Sennakherib (Idem, 1927: 139),

Esarheddon (Ibid: 204), and Aššur-Banipal (Ibid: 298). Šamaš-Addad V and Tiglat-Pileser III had invaded the enemy with Šamaš's order (Idem, 1926: 255, 283).

Therefore, according to the above mentioned pieces of evidence, the Sun Deity had the function of judgment and justice even more than the sun and light in Mesopotamia.

Šiwini in Inscriptions

Sun Deity in Urartu was Šiwini but mostly written in Sumerogram form of UTU and rarely the syllabical form; Ši-i-ú-i-ni (Salvini, 2008: A 11-1 vo §28; Ibid: A 5-80 §1-3). The syllabical form is tracked in Urartian inscriptions just twice. He was the third most significant deity in Urartu according to the royal inscriptions. Šiwini is mentioned in the third place in the list of deities of MherKapsi inscription (Ibid: A 3-1 §4). Four bulls and eight sheep were to be sacrificed to him accordingly. The Urartian capital Tušpa is believed to be the center of Šiwini worship and "the deity of (the people of) Tušpa" could be Šiwini (Grekyan 2006: 168-169). Tušpunia, his spouse, was in accordance with Tušpa (Ibid). Therefore, it was possible that the east of Lake Van was Šiwini's praising region.

According to Belli (2003-2004: 111), Šiwini is very similar to Hurrite Šimigi. Ivanov (1980: 136) compares Šiwini with Hittite Šiuni. Grekyan (2006: 173) argues that possibly Šiwini had been merged with the Urartian Sun Deity.

Šiwini depiction over the shield from Upper Anzaf (Fig. 2) is among a few pictorial piece of evidence. Accordingly, Šiwini, along with other Urartian deities, invaded the Assyrian army. He is the third god after Țaldi and Teišeba riding a bull and not a horse. But, his winged disc could be a clue to his recognition (Çilingirođlu, 2004; Batmaz,

2012). Comparing to Šamaš, the sun (Fig. 3) and the winged disc (Fig. 4a-b) were Šiwini's main symbols as well. There is a rather unusual demonstration of the sun discs in the hands of a kneeling facing right beardless man or deity as well (Figs. 5a-b).



Fig. 2. (Çilingiroğlu, 2004: 268-269)

Other symbols of Šamaš as the wheel (Ter-Martirosov, 2009: 137), rosette (Ibid: 14), and horse (Movsisan, 2006: 121) are not known as Šiwini's symbols.

As mentioned before, the sun deity in Urartu is written mostly in Sumerogram UTU and not Ši-i-ú-i-ni. UTU is mentioned in the Urartian inscriptions after Țaldi and Teišeba in many inscriptions as Argišti I'sannal in Khorkhor cave in Van, SurbPagos inscription, Sarduri II's inscription in Hazinepiri Kapisi, Habib Ushaghi inscription (Salvini, 2008: A 8-1 l.d §25 and vo §26; Ibid: A 8-3 I §23 and III §26 and V §21 and VI §19; Ibid: A 9-3 IV §5 and A 9-4 §8), and Minua's

inscription in Karakhan (Ibid: 1 5-8 §1-4). Four bulls and eight sheep was to be offered to UTU in Urartuas is mentioned in MherKapisi inscription by Išpuini and Minua (Ibid: A 3-1 §4). But, in the inscriptions of Chelebibaghi by Argišti II (Ibid: A 11-1 vo 28), Ayanis by Rusa II (Ibid: A 12-1 I §10), and Keshishgul by Rusa III (Ibid: A 14-1 vo §7) there is only one sheep to be sacrificed for UTU. Sometimes the inscriptions were inscribed with the order of UTU as in MherKapisi (Ibid: A 3-1 §2 and 34 and 35) and SurbPagus (Ibid: A 9-1 §10) inscriptions. Also, UTU is very much mentioned in the ending cursings of royal inscriptions. Of course, these endings are different than the Assyrian ones (Benedict, 1961: 383). Urartian deities were requested to punish the destroyer of the constructions or inscriptions and his successors or decedents; Thesedeit were Țaldi, Weather Deity, and Sun Deity or ^DUTU. Some scholars have been translated ^DUTU in to Šiwini through time but it is better to translate ^DUTU as Sun Deity and Ši-i-ú-i-ni as Šiwini.

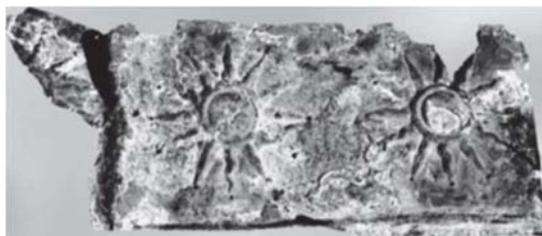


Fig. 3. (Batmaz, 2012, fig. 29b)



Fig. 4a. (Bonacossi, 1995, fig. b)

The context of the cursings included the calling of the king to deities to destroy the inimical act of the enemy against the king's inscription or construction. There also is a usual but unclear phrase as well (mì-i ar-ḫi ú-ru-li-a-nimì i-na-i-nimì-I na-ra-a a-ú-i-e ú-lu-li-e) (Dara, 2017: 63, 66, 74, 83, 108, 113; Salvini, 2008: A 5-1 § 15-24; A 5-3; A 5-12 a-c § 7-14; A 5-22 vo § 10'-26'; A 5-58 a-c; A 5-56 § 6-11; A 5-86 §1-17; A 8-3 III § 11-13; A 9-4 § 35-40; A 9-11 § 10-11; A 11-8 vo § 1-20; A 5-76 § 5-17; A 5-70 § 1-6; A 5-60 § 13-19).

According to Gordeziani (2001: 62), the deities' punishment would take place "under the sun". He suggested that "under the sun" is the controlled region of Urartian deities. Salvini and Trémouille (February, 2014, pers. comm) argued that it means on the ground and wherever the sun shines over. The author suggests that this phrase is an effect of the function of Šamaš or UTU on Urartian beliefs as this deity was Judgment and Justice Deity in Mesopotamia. "Under the sun" could mention the power and control of Sun Deity over the people to avoid crimes and vicious and malicious acts. Therefore, Sun Deity in Urartu had the function of judgment and justice as well as sun and light.

Sometimes, the decedents of the destructor were to be punished and cursed as well; "May the deities destroy his decedent (or decedent's decedent or decedent's decedent's decedent) under the sun" (Dara, 2017: 44, 119; Salvini, 2008: A 5-91 vo. § 1-8; A 8-3 VIII § 11-13; A 9-4 § 35-40; A 9-13 § 20-28; A 10-2 § 19-20; A 12-2 VIII § 4-10; A 12-8 § 32-47 A 12-8 § 32-47; A 14-2 vo § 35-49).

"Whoever destroys this inscription (or stele) is to be removed from the earth by Ḫaldi, Wether Deity, and Sun Deity and the deities would bury his name in the ground" was another method of cursing (Ibid: A 3-4

vo § 21'-36'; A 5-30 vo § 6-11; A 5-31 vo § 8-13). Of course, this is not a usual cursing formula. There is a mention of whoever would destroy this inscription, Ḫaldi, Wether Deity, Sun Deity, and the ground and (other) deities would bury him under the ground (Ibid: A 8-7 § 11-13).



Fig. 4b. (Tarontsi, 2017: 364)

Comparison between Šamaš and Šiwini

It is already proven that Mesopotamian Šamaš had two functions of the sun and judgment. His sun function was more mentioned in myths than royal inscriptions. His judgment function was more significant and he was the punisher of the kings' enemies and the criminals.

Šiwini was Sun Deity in Urartu. But, he had the third place in Urartian pantheon. He is more mentioned as UTU not Šiwini. It seems that Šiwini's place in Urartian pantheon is higher than Šamaš's in Mesopotamia.

Šiwini is less requested and called by Urartian kings at the beginning of the royal inscriptions and rarely mentioned with his specific sacrifices and offerings. He is more the punisher. "Under the sun" in the ending cursings of Urartian royal inscriptions possibly meant that Šiwini could control and observe everybody including the sinners and enemies and punish them. It seems that this

function has been affected by Mesopotamian Šamaš, the sinners' punisher.



Fig. 5a. (Kendall, fig. 14a)



Fig. 5b. (Çavuşoğlu, fig. 12)

Šiwini and Šamaš are similar in being more of the Judgment Deities than Sun Deities in the Royal inscriptions. There is no Urartian mythical inscription found in Urartu and it is not clear if Šiwini was more a Sun Deity in Urartu or not.

The winged disc and horse was the symbol and illustration of Sun Deity in Near East, Mesopotamia, and Urartu.

Conclusion

There is lack of variant texts in Urartu. Most of the Urartian inscriptions are royal or warehouse texts. Therefore, we know little about their religion, beliefs, and mythology. Urartian deities' illustrations have taken place less than Mesopotamia. But, this amount of information about their deities could lead us to some possible conclusions.

Akkadian Šamaš and Summerian UTU had the function of the sun in Mesopotamian myths and judgment in royal inscriptions. His function as Judgment and Justice Deity is very similar to Urartian Šiwini. These two would punish the sinner or criminal or the king's enemy. They both would punish the destroyer of the kings' inscriptions and constructions as the Justice Deities.

"Under the sun" could have been mentioned as Urartian and Mesopotamian Sun Deities could observe everyone during a day and could punish the criminals or deities in case of a crime or vicious act.

Of course, Šiwini is the third most significant and supreme deity in the Urartian pantheon. But, Šamaš was not similarly high ranked.

Both had the symbol of winged disc and horse and Šiwini was more mentioned as UTU than syllabically written as Šiwini.

Therefore, it is obvious that the sun function of Šamaš and Šiwini was less considerable than the justice and judgment functions. They were both punishers.

Accordingly, it is possible that Šamaš affected Šiwini. This is also widespread in Ancient Near East that some previously reputed deities could have the effect over the later ones. This could not be mentioned as the imitation but as the effect. They had some similarities in their functions and symbols.

Sun have the crucial role on everyday life of people all around the world since antiquity. Therefore, it was common that people with different beliefs and from various regions respected it. The sun was believed to witness every one and was the supporter of the kings in the ancient Near East. Therefore, sun deities as Šamaš and Šiwini could punish king's enemies and invaders and also the criminals.

Of course this underlined function is not tracable in all the sun deities. Iranian Mehr as well was believed to punish the liars and not necessarily kings' enemies. Mehr was not only Sun and Judgment Deity but also and

more importantly Allenece and Treaty Deity; unlike Šamaš and Šiwini.

Additionally, they have differences in the inscription they are called in including their specific offerings and the method they were called. Also, Šiwini had the more important role in cursings.

Šamaš and Šiwini's similarities are undoubtedly considerable but it is not possible that one has imitated another as there are many similarities in the function of ancient deities without any relationship between the cultures. It is just possible to announce that Šamaš as the more ancient one could affect more recent Šiwini.

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آیا شیوینی اورارتویی تقلیدی از شمش میان‌رودانی است؟

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چکیده

رب‌النوع خورشید در دوران باستان گاه خویش‌کاری قضاوت داشت. شمش میان‌رودانی و شیوینی اورارتویی از این دسته هستند. خویشکاری خدای قضاوت حتی از خویشکاری خورشید مهم‌تر بود. شمش در متون اسطوره‌ای خورشید بزرگ است، اما در متون شاهی قاضی است. شیوینی در پایان یا نفرین‌های کتیبه‌های شاهی نام برده شده که از میان‌برنده آن اثر و دشمن را مجازات کند. او گاهی دو خدای بزرگ دیگر ایزدستان اورارتویی، خالدی و تیشبا، را همراهی می‌کند. شیوینی به شکل خدای بالدار یا اسب تصویر شده است که هر دو نماد شمش نیز هستند. بنا بر این، شباهت میان شمش و شیوینی غیرقابل انکار است. البته تفاوت‌های نیز میان طرز یاد شدن شیوینی به‌عنوان سومین مهم‌ترین خدای ایزدستان اورارتویی و شمش در متون شاهی مشاهده می‌شود. هدف نگارنده این است که این دو خدا را با یکدیگر براساس متون قیاس کند تا تأثیر شمش بر شیوینی و درعین حال عدم تقلید کامل شیوینی از شمش را نشان دهد.

واژه‌های کلیدی: اورارتو، شیوینی، شمش، میان‌رودان

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