

ADYGHE (CIRCASSIAN) GOD OF THUNDER SHIBLE AND ANATOLIAN TESHUB: A COMPARATIVE STUDY

The article studies the worship of the thunder god Shible by the Adyghe and compares it with a similar ancient Anatolian cult. The archaic nature of the Adyghe's religious rites and the associated legends is confirmed by analogies with the religion and mythology of the Hattians / Hittites. A study of Hittite sources shows that the worship of Shible was similar to the widespread cult of the thunder god called Teshub among the Hattians / Hittites and Hurites. Significant information in this regard is provided by Hittite sources describing the celebration of the spring festival Puruli by the Hattians / Hittites in the sacred city of Nerik. The main event of the Puruli celebration was the Teshub's confrontation with the dragon Illuyanki. This motif resembles the Adyghe myth of Shible defeating the underground dragon. The rituals related to agriculture and fertility, which feature the god of thunder as one of the main characters, are identical. The piety of the Adyghe towards Shible is strikingly similar to the veneration of Teshub by the ancient Anatolians — a complex sacred cult of whom was revered invariably. This paper reveals a close relationship between ancient sources and narrative the 15th–20th centuries, ethnological, archeological and linguistic data. The author employs historical, comparative, systemic and retrospective research methods. The preservation of the archaic religion of the Adyghe over a long time made it possible to study related materials from the 19th and even the beginning of the 20th centuries. The study of translations of Hittite reveals similarities between the cults of fertility and agriculture of the Adyghe and ancient Anatolians.

Keywords: Adyghe, Abkhazians, aerial burial, cult of agriculture and fertility, Shible, Hatti, Teshub

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For citation: Kagazezhev, Z. V. 2026. Adyghe (Circassian) God of Thunder Shible and Anatolian Teshub: A Comparative Study. *Herald of Anthropology (Vestnik Antropologii)* 3: 313–322.

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