Apiculture in Hittite cuneiform texts

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Abstract

The Hittite cuneiform texts dated to the 2nd millennium BCE contain some of the earliest information about the production of honey as an economic product and its consumption in daily life, as well as the theological perception of honey bees. Thanks to the information obtained from the texts, the material and spiritual role of apiculture have been tried to be revealed in this paper. According to laws, honey is a commercial product and is traded at a value. In addition, apiculture is a profession made with expert knowledge and the right of ownership of the honey bee colony and hive associated with this profession is legally protected. In the texts giving information about culinary knowledge, honey is added to bread as a sweetening product and used in the production of various sauces and some beverages. The aromatic properties of honey are also known. In this context, it is included in the mixtures used for incense in rituals. Also in rituals, some of its qualities were used in analogical spells. In mythological/religious texts, the honey bee is a creature that brings abundance and fertility in spring. In this context, it plays an important role in myths of finding the Disappearing Gods, the symbol of fertility. At the same time, it represents fertility, peace, and reconciliation as a creature associated with the Sun Goddess of the Earth, another symbol of fertility.

Keywords: Hittite, cuneiform texts, apiculture, honey bee, honey, wax

Introduction

The “honey hunting” reaches back to the Upper Paleolithic Period (Dams & Dams 1977; Head 2008) and the use of bee products dates back to the Neolithic ages (Mellaart 2003; Roffet-Salque et al. 2015). With the Late Bronze Age, information on apiculture becomes more evident. In the 3rd Millennium BCE, many methods of beekeeping practiced today were known in the Ancient Near East and its immediate surroundings. In Sumer and Akkad, honey was used for nutrition, medicine, and lost-wax casting of metals (Crane 1999). Thanks to the bee iconography dated to the Old Kingdom period in Egypt (c. 2400 BCE), a bee species (Apis mellifera) has been identified for the first time (Crane 1999). Much more is known about beekeeping traditions in Egypt, thanks to both textual and iconographic evidence (Crane & Graham 1985; Crane 1999). Hive beekeeping in the Greek period and in the Roman world is documented by both written evidence and archaeological data. In both periods, there is more information about the characteristic aspects and practices of apiculture (Crane 1999).

There is no clear evidence for apiculture in Anatolia until the 2nd millennium BCE. Thanks to textual references, more information about its place in daily life began to be obtained for the first time at the beginning of the 2nd millennium BCE. In Kültepe texts, Akkadian diṣpu (CAD V3/D 1959; von Soden 1965) and Sumerian LAL (MSL III 1955) are used for “honey”. Although Kültepe texts offer only scarce evidence regarding apiculture, bee products have an important place in culinary culture (Öz 2014). Also in this period, honey is bought and sold as a commercial good and some cities have become important in apiculture (Orlin 1970; Sever 1991; Albayrak 2002; Öz 2014; Garelli & Cécile 2015). Apicultural practices in this period are likely to have continued in the Hittite period.
The Hittite Empire was established in north-central Anatolia around 1600 BCE, and after c. 1190 BCE, it came to an end. Hittite culture basically consisted of the combination of Hatti, Hurrian, Luwian, and other contemporary Anatolian societies and it was widely influenced by Northern Syria and Babylon, where it spread. Therefore, it has emerged from a multicultural and multilingual structure. The empire has official archives containing a great number of tablets in cuneiform writing, especially in the capital Hattusha (Boğazköy). While the majority of the information on the tablets, reflects the official ideology of the state rather than the daily life of the people, is related to society, culture, religion, and political geography. Some of them are related to agriculture and farming. It is possible to obtain information about apiculture from different types of tablets in the Hittite period. Because honey bees and bee products have a place not only in the economic sense but also in folkloric. Based on the information in these texts, Tyler (1984) and Erkut (2011) have published two striking short articles on honey and its use. In addition, Hoffner (1974) examined honey as a food ingredient in Alimenta Hathaeorum, which he wrote on foodstuffs in the Hittites and Haas (2003) published a comprehensive study on honey and bees in Materia Magica et Medica Hethitica. Although this article has been mostly prepared based on the mentioned publications, all relevant texts have been analyzed as a whole and some new evaluations have been made.

The type of honey bee mentioned in the Hittite cuneiform texts is not clear. Because there is no distinguishing feature for the species in the texts. In addition, there was no bee depiction in Hittite art. Similarly, the hive and comb construction techniques and types are also uncertain. (The traditional practices seen in Anatolia can be attributed to the Hittite period. For a remarkable recent publication, see Yılmaz Erkovan & Özgenel 2022.) Archaeological data on the subject is also very limited and only provide information on the consumption of honey. The only archaeological data on the use of honey in the Hittite texts is a mixture of nigella (black cumin) and bee products (honey and wax) in a flask-shaped container found at Boyalı Höyük (Salih et al. 2009). The fact that the materials related to the production processes (hives, etc.) are probably organic makes it difficult to determine the subject from an archaeological point of view. Due to the scarcity of archaeological data, it is necessary to evaluate the subject of honey bees and apiculture in the Hittites through cuneiform texts.

In Hittite cuneiform texts, dated from the 17th to the 13th centuries BCE, Hittite milit-, Luwian mal- and Sumerian LĀL (CHD L-N 1989; Hoffner 1974; Haas 2003) is used for “honey”. Although the Hittite word for bee is unknown, the Sumerian NIM.LĀL is used (Ertem 1965; Haas 2003). In these texts, Sumerian is dominant in apiculture terminology. The Sumerian Ė.NIM.LĀL means “honey (production) house/shelter/hive”, DUH. LĀL means “beeswax” (Rüster & Neu 1989; Erkut 2011) and ĖL14.NIM.LĀL means “beekeeper” (Hoffner 1967; Daddi 1982).

Apiculture in laws

The most remarkable information about apiculture in Hittite cuneiform texts is in the collection law of Hittite (c. 1650–1500 BCE) (CHD 291–292: Friedrich 1971; Hoffner 1997). Three articles of the law are related to apiculture. While two articles are related to the defense of property rights (§ 91, 92), one determines the market value of honey (§ 181). According to § 91 (KBo 6.2 IV 32–33); “If anyone steals bees in a swarm, formerly they paid 1 mina of silver (~450 gr), but now he shall pay 5 shekels (~35 gr) of silver, and he shall look to his house for it”. In this article, 1 mina (~450 gr) silver penalty was given to stealing a swarm/group of bees (kanmara-) from the hive, while 5 shekels (~35 gr) silver penalty was deemed appropriate according to the new case. So the penalty has been commuted. § 92 states the penalty for hive theft: “If anyone steals 2 or 3 bee hives, formerly the offender would have been exposed to beesting. But now he shall pay 6 shekels of silver. If anyone steals a beehive, if there are no bees in the hive, he shall pay 3 shekels of silver” (KBo 6.2 IV 34–36). In this article, stealing more than one hive was punished with a physical punishment by stinging bees in the past, whereas in the new case, stealing an empty hive was punished with 3 shekels (~21 gr) of silver. It is understood from these articles that apiculture is made a profession because the ownership of bees and hives can belong to one person and the distinction between hive and the empty hive is made. Therefore, Ė.NIM.LĀL, which is used for the hive in the texts, refers to a man-made hive and bee products are produced by domestic rather than wild bees. In addition, ĖL14.NIM.LĀL “beekeeper/beekeeper” (Hoffner 1967; Daddi 1982) mentioned in the texts other than laws should be used for people who have a profession in apiculture.

In § 181 the value of honey was determined: “... a zipattani honey is I shekel of silver” (KBo 6.26 II 46). Accordingly, honey in the scale of zipattani/zipattani, translated as a small cup (Friedrich
Honey as a food and sweetener

In the Hittite Period, honey was added to foods and especially bread as a flavoring agent in daily life (Hoffner 1974; Karauğuz 2006). In Hittite cuneiform texts, the bread with honey are as follows; NINDA.LÁL “honey bread” (KUB 20.11 II 5, KUB 32.128 I 5, KBO 10.34 I 12, KBO 10.36 II 15, KBO 11.52 V 10, KBO 15.37 III 51, KUB 27.16 IV 4). *maltititallâ* “a kind of bread with honey/honey bread” (KUB 42.91 II 2; CHD L-N 1989; Ünal 2007a). NINDA.LÁL ŠÁ ZÍL “wheat/grain honey bread” (KUB 45.58 IV 8 1. KUB 53.11 Rev. III 14. KBO 10.34 Obv. I 12–13). NINDA.LÁL … euwanaš “euwanaš honey bread” (KBO 10.34 Obv. I 12–13). Suggestions for euwanaš-: a variety of barley (Laroche 1968; Hoffner 1967; Ünal 2016), a fruit (Friedrich 1952), a plant of the genus barley or wheat (Ertem 1974). NINDA.LÁL … parhuenaš- “parhuena honey bread” (KBO 10.34 Obv. I 12–13). Suggestions for parhuenaš-: a sweet fruit (Friedrich 1952; Hoffner 1967), a plant of the type of wheat or barley (Ertem 1974). NINDA.LÁL ŠÁ GÚ.TUR “pea/lentil honey bread” (KBO 10.34 Obv. I 12–13). NINDA.LÁL … ŠÁ GÚ.GAL.GAL “bean/bread bean . honey bread” (KBO 10.34 Obv. I 12–14). NINDA.LÁL GÚ.GAL.GAL mallantaš “ground bean/bread beans honey bread” (KBO 16.78 I 8). NINDA.LÁL … šamaizna “šamaizna honey bread” (KBO 10.34 Obv. I 12–14). NINDA.LÁL … GIS hašikkaš “hašikka honey bread” (KBO 10.34 Obv. I 12–14). Suggestions for hašikkaš: a fruit (Friedrich 1952), a kind of fig (Hoffner 1967), opium poppy (Ertem 1974). NINDA.LÁL … šapšamaš “šapšama honey bread” (KBO 10.34 Obv. I 12.14). Suggestions for šapšamaš: sesame (Güterbock 1968; Hoffner 1995; CHD Š-1 2002), an oil plant, sesame(?) (Ünal 2016). NINDA.LÁL ŠE.GIS.I “sesame/flax seed honey bread” (KUB 55.51 IV 16, KUB 44.49 Rev. 6 1, KUB 45.58 IV 8 1) NINDA.LÁL NU.UR.MA UDUN-an “pomegranate honey bread” (KUB 45.58 IV 8). NINDA.LÁL šéppitaš- “šéppit honey bread” KUB 45.58 IV 9.

Suggestions for šeppitaš-: a kind of cereal plant (Friedrich 1952; Ertem 1974), a grain, a type of wheat or barley (Ünal 2016). NINDA.LÁL kuišša KÁx UD-āš “tooth-shaped/toothed honey bread” (KUB 38.25 I 20). Although honey (LÁL/milit-) is not mentioned in its name, NINDA.(KUR)RA.)KU and NINDA *mitgaimiš* “sweet bread” may also refer to bread with honey (Hoffner 1974).

It is included in some beverages, notably wine and beer. The names of these are: LÁL GEŠTIN “honey wine” (KUB 12.5 I 17, KBO 24.54 Rev. 18). KAŠ LÁL “honey beer” (VBoT 58 Rev. IV 22, 32, 44. KUB 36.44 + 53.20 Rev. IV 7, 16, 18, 24, ABoT 5 + KBO 17.9 + 20+ KBO 20.5+ KBO 25.12 II 9, KBO 20.33+ KBO 17.46 + 21+ KBO 25.19 Obv. 8. For more information see: Steiner 1966; Haas 2003; Hoffner 1974; Erkut 2011. The second word can also be translated as “sweetened/sweet beer”; Ünal 2007). The word LÁL šaq “honey to drink” (BIN 6, 29 21–22) in Kültepe texts may mean that honey is liquefied by adding some ingredients or used in the production of wine/molasses-like foods (Öz 2014). A mixture of nigella (black cumin) and bee products (honey and wax) in a flask-shaped container found at Boyalı Höyük (Salih et al. 2009) may be the archaeological data of this type of beverage from the Hittite period.

According to the information in the texts, honey was used during the preparation of some dishes. Pure olive oil and honey were used as a kind of sauce, especially to increase the flavor of fried meat (KBO 2.3 I 51–55). In the Maštigga ritual, honey and olive oil are put into the fried meat; “they butcher the sheep, then cut it into pieces, cook it and burn it (fry it), pour honey and pure olive oil on it” (KBO 39.8 II 39–42, Reyhan 2008). In the continuation of the same text, there is another piece of information about the use of honey; “then she (old woman) takes seven hupuwa (DUG *hupuwa*)- vessels, fills them with wine, virgin olive oil, honey (also) adds figs, raisins, sinew, salt (and) tallow (also)” (KBO 39.8 III 29–32, Reyhan 2008). In a ritual text about the cult of Nerik, coarsely ground flour/semolina/bulgur (menal- Ünal 2016) is mixed with honey in a kakapi (DUG *qaqapi*) bowl (KUB 38.25 I 18). In addition, LÁL.GIBIL “fresh honey” (KUB 9.16 I 20, KUB 10.48 I 4) mentioned in the texts gives an idea that the freshness of honey is known.

Use of honey as a fragrance

In rituals and perhaps in daily life, the aromatic smell of honey when burned was used. According to a ritual text, a cypress tree, I.NUN (essential oil: Ünal 1996, ghee/butter: Hoffner 1994) and honey
were smoked in a pot with a charcoal fire (KBo 11.14 I 17–19). In another ritual text, the mixture of honey and olive oil in a pot was probably burned with a piece of wood used as a wick (KUB 32.8 III 20–23, see: Ünal 1996). In another text, a fragrance is obtained by burning honey and oil (KBo 17.11 I 8, see Otten & Souček 1969). There is also a similar use of oil, honey, figs, and raisins as in the last text (KUB 17.12 III 6–15).

**Honey and beeswax in medicinal use and rituals**

There a few examples of the use of honey for medicinal purposes in the texts. It is not clear from the existing examples what kind of treatment honey is used for. The existence of Hittite medicine is still debated (For opposing views, see Güterbock 1962; Ünal 1980). The reason for this discussion is that rituals have an important place in practices that can be considered medical. This is also true for honey. In the relevant texts, honey is used as a part of a ritual rather than its healing properties: “When Lamashtu has hold of a person, then s/he (the physician) does as follows: [s/he takes] the summanza of a white pig, the defecation of a woman, … […] and combines it (the mixture) together with cypress oil, if in a house (and) the owner of the house […] I take honey and rinse the mouth of each of the maids in the house” (KBo 21.20 Obv. 16–20, Collins 2006; Burde 1974; Also see, KBo 12.124 III 19–21, KUB 44.64 II 18).

Honey and beeswax have been used for cleansing in some ritual practices and myths. This usage can sometimes mean physical cleaning (šuppīyah-), and sometimes it refers to a ritualistic purification (parкунун-). In a ritual to rid a newborn baby of the curse, the old woman takes ale bread, puts it on the baby’s tongue, and lubricates her limbs with melted butter. Then she completely wipes his tongue with honey. After asking the gods to restore the baby’s health, the old woman spit into her mouth twice (KBo 3.8 II 31–34 Oettinger 2004; also see; KBo 19.142 iii 30–31 Puhvel 1991). A similar wipe-off with honey can be seen in the myths of the Disappearance God; “when you find him, sting him on his hands and feet and make him stand up. Then take wax and wipe him off” (KUB 33.5 II 5–7. Puhvel 1984). In some spells performed to provide spiritual cleansing, honey or beeswax was used together with other substances. In analogical spells, emphasis was placed on the physical properties of beeswax; “(the officer) places beeswax and sheep fat in their (soldier’s) hands. And as he casts them into the fire, he says, ‘As this wax melts and oil cooks, whoever breaks his oath and deceives the King of the Land of Hatti, let him melt like wax and cook like oil’. (Soldiers) replies, ‘So be it’” (KBo 6.34+ KUB 48.76 Obv. I 47 Obv. II 3. Haas 2003). Another example; “(The priest take) beer, wine, honey (and) diluted wine and he libates. The priest keeps the goat ready. And the person standing in front blesses him (the goat). The priest hits the neck of the goat with a stick. He kills it and throws it into the flames” (KUB 9.28 II 10 Obv. Goetze 1970; CHD L-N 1989).

In the Ammihaṭna Ritual, which was applied for the treatment of spiritually polluted and physically ill people honey, olive oil, figs, raisins, and olives were placed in the ḫupuwai- pot, which was placed on the sacrificial table to appease the angry gods (KBo 5.2 Obv. II 35–38, Murat 2003). In another Hittite rituals porridge, oil, honey, fragrant fine oils (I. DUGH), wine mixed with oil, bread and sacrificial materials were put on the roads leading to the temples to attract the attention of the gods who left their temple because of anger (KUB 15.31 II 34, KUB 15.34 I 23–25). In the ritual for the purification of a house, oil, honey, wine, walhi- drink and marmuwan- drink, a shekel of silver, and a hand towel are placed in the pits dug for cleaning purposes (KBo 10.45 III 22–27 Reyhan 2016).

As a common feature in medical or ritual texts, honey and beeswax are used to heal enchanted, spiritually contaminated, physically sick people and gods. As a common feature in medical or ritual texts, bees and honey seem to be used to heal enchanted, spiritually polluted, physically sick people and gods. Here, the positive things represented by the bee and the sweetness in the nature of honey must have been used symbolically.

**Bee and honey in mythological/religious texts**

As a sacred animal, the bee has an important role in Hittite mythology and religion. Bees and bee products have many symbolic meanings, especially in the myths of the Hattians, whose inhabited in Anatolian of the 3rd millennium BCE. In these myths, the bee is mainly associated with two cults. The first is the mother goddess Hannahanna and the other is the Sun Goddess of the Earth (for transcription and translations of the texts, see: Haas 1981; Hoffner 1998; Karauğuz 2001; Archi 2007).

In the myths of the Disappearing God, the bee has an important role in finding the gods whose disappearance disrupts the order of nature. Because it is shown in a superior position to the eagle and other big and small gods who seeking god. The most famous version of which is related to Telipinu, the god of agriculture and the son of the Storm God. In the myth, the goddess Hannahanna sends a bee to find Telipinu; “Hannahanna sent a bee; You go search for [my son] Telipinu. When you find [him] sting his hands and feet
and make him stand up … Then conduct him back here to me. The Storm God said to Hannahanna: “Now the great and the lesser gods were searching for him, but didn’t find him. So this bee is going to find him? Its wings are small. It too is small. And furthermore, it is all by itself?”’ (KUB 32.5 II 4–14). In the continuation of the myth, the bee seeks and finds the god; “The bee searched the high mountains, it searched [the deep valleys, it searched the blue] Deep. The honey was exhausted in its interior, [the …] was exhausted. But [it found] him in a meadow in the town of Lihzina, in a forest. It stung [him] on his hands and feet so that he got up” (KUB 33.10 II 1–5).

In a fragment of the myths of disappearing and returning deities, the eagle’s inability to find the god and the call to the bee is as follows; “[O … (?)] bee, you hold the honey inside. [Thou] you [seek] the high mountains. [Eagle (?)] travels all over the place (says): “I searched everywhere. I [didn’t] find [him] in the forests. Is he going to the vineyards […]? Hattusa? […] will it stretch over it? Will it lie in the thicket? Will it descend [into the dark earth]?” (KUB 33.13 II 21–28). In the same myth, the positive qualities of honey are mentioned in the analogical spell to quell the anger of the god Telipinu; “[Just as] honey is sweet, as ghee is mild, so let the soul of Telipinu become sweet in the same way, and let it become mild in the same way” (KUB 17.10 II 25–27). In the myth of Telipinu, this remarkable role played by the bee is a common feature in all myths of the Disappearing God.

In the myths of the Inara, Hannahanna sends a bee to the Inara, tutelary deity and goddess of wild nature. The introductory part of the text is broken; “Hannahanna sent a bee to the Tutelary Deity, (saying); ‘Take a goat’s horn and make a sound’. The Tutelary Deity made a sound. And everyone went somewhere. The God of War heard and was afraid” (KUB 33.52 II 4–9). In another myth about the goddess Inara, the bee brings a hunting bag; “The bee went and brought the hunting bag. While it was coming, Hannahanna made three watarru-basin (?). Over one an ippias- tree. is standing; under the second a wooden huaparas- the vessel is lying; and on the third, fire is burning” (KUB 33.59 III 5–9). In both these texts, the bee plays the role of a messenger among the gods.

Bees are also associated with the terrestrial cult. In a ritual text associated with the Sun Goddess of the Earth, goddess of the underworld, the bee was presented as a gift; “Sun Goddess of Earth! You keep the human alive/heal it(?) and you, the Sun Goddess of the Earth, now the bee honey you sent, the King (and) Queen offers as a gift(?)” (KBo 11.10 Obv. II 20–24. Haas 2003; Popko 2003). In the continuation of this text, it is prayed that the goddess will give the king and queen a long and fruitful life and the bee is shown as a peace-bringing figure; “The Sun Goddess of the Earth protects and saves man. And you Sun Goddess of Earth, look at the Bee you have sent! In the end, there will be reconciliation” (KBo 11.10 No. II 20–24). The fact that the Sun Goddess of the Earth and the fertility she represents are associated with the bees seems to be compatible with the myths of the Disappearing God.

Kamrušepa helps the bee in another fragment of the Hittic-Hittite myth called text of the voyage of the immortal human soul: “[…] the cattle are sleeping. The sheep is [sleeping]. The sky is sleeping. [The earth is sleeping]. […] the human spirit. Where did he come from? (If) it is on the mountain, let the bee fulfill it and put it in its place. If it is in the mountain, let the bee bring it and put it in its place. If however, it is in the plain, let the bee (again) bring it and put it in its place. That which is from the plowed field, let the bees bring it and put it in its place. Let the bees go on a journey of three (or) four days and bring my […] here” (KUB 43.60 Obv. 1–15). It is difficult to understand exactly what is said in this text. However, the lost soul of a mortal is expected to be found by a bee.

The sacred tree motif, which is common in ancient Near Eastern legends, may be associated with a bee in a Hittite text; “An eagle is perched on the branches of (tree) above, wrapped around the body of a snake (?) below, a bee hangs/turns in the middle of (tree)” (KUB 43.62 III 5–7. Collins 2002). “NIM.LAL” “bee” (KUB 48.7 III 1) and “annaš NIM.LAL” “mother bee” (88/d right) in a text about the K.LAM festival (Singer 1983, 1984) may be related to the mythological aspect of the Hattian K.LAM festival.

Conclusion

Honey was the oldest and longest used sweetening material and the honey bee who produced this food aroused human curiosity. Infesting religion and culture, this small insect has been a venerated creature in folk tales/myths and traditions/beliefs. The common themes among these are that bees, as gifted animals, reflect social values, and bees and bee products represent what is sacred and valuable (Ransome 1937). This is valid for Anatolia in the Hittite period and it lasted until 1500s when scientific observations were made (Crane 2004).

Beekeeping should have been done as a part of agriculture in the Hittite Period of the 2nd millennium BCE. The Hittite cuneiform texts from this period show that beekeeping has an older history. The laws on beekeeping, the use of bee products in culinary culture, and the role played by honey bees and honey in religion/mythology carry traces of the past. However, unfortunately, the methods of apiculture are not mentioned in the texts. For example,
there is no information about the beehive types that were used, the construction of the hive, the types of honey, or the honey harvest. These information deficiencies can be explained by the fact that the texts come from official archives.

The most striking information is contained in the laws. Because they show the importance of honey and apiculture in daily life. According to these texts, honey is a commercial product and its trading is done at a value mentioned in legal texts (§181). It can be said that the value of honey varies according to supply and demand, and therefore this value is often not valid (perhaps it has never been taken into account). However, the important point here is that the value of honey has been shown in laws because it has an economic value. In this context, it can be said that apiculture is a profession done with expert knowledge. People could have a honey bee colony or hives. Because sometimes a honey bee colony (§ 91) and the hive (§91) could be stolen. Hittite legal texts are relatively few, and the existence of these regulations, however, suggests that such problems are frequently encountered. It should also be noted that it may be more accurate to consider apiculture in the Hittite Era as an activity that provides a side income for the population engaged in animal husbandry, just as it is in today’s Anatolia.

According to the texts that give direct or indirect information about culinary knowledge in the Hittite Age, honey is included in daily foods such as bread. Honey is added to at least thirteen types of bread as a sweetening product. Honey has also been used in the making of various dishes and sauces. It is also understood that honey is used in the production of some beversages or by diluting it directly. It was especially used in the production of some types of wine and beer, and it was also consumed by dilution with black cumin (possibly together with similar products). The fact that this mixture was found in a flask at Boyalı Höyük suggests that it was consumed as a kind of energizing beverage.

It is difficult to distinguish between medical and ritual texts in Hittite literature. In these texts, the positive qualities of honey and beeswax are emphasized from an analogical point of view. In these analogical rituals/prescriptions, the sweetness of honey and the cleansing of beeswax were used for the purpose of spiritual cleansing and relieving anger of people or gods.

The positive qualities of bees, honey, and beeswax are also included in mythological and religious texts. In these texts, the bee is a creature that brings abundance and fertility. This small insect plays a role in the myths of goddesses associated with fertility and often has a role as a messenger and a seeker of fertility. This should be related to the appearance of bees in the spring, rather than knowing the positive contribution of bees to pollination. In myths of the Disappearing Gods, as a common theme, neither the gods nor the eagles cannot find the god, the symbol of fertility, but only the bee manages to find the god. It may be appropriate to evaluate the symbolism here as follows; Heralding the end of the infertility of the winter season and starting to wander around the countryside from the beginning of spring, the bees will seek out the lost god responsible for fertility and nature will be revived. Apart from the myths of the Disappearing God, the association of the bee with the Sun Goddess of the Earth, the symbol of fertility, is both meaningful and compatible with her role as a herald of fertility seen in the previous examples. In addition, in the same text group, the bee symbolizes peace/reconciliation in a positive sense and a soft touch from an analogical point of view.

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