

FEDERICO GIUSFREDI

The problem of the Luwian title *tarwanis*¹

Abstract

This article takes into consideration the different proposals advanced so far on the origin and meaning of the Iron age Hieroglyphic Luwian title *tarwanis* (normally translated as “ruler”) as well as of the abstract noun *tarwan(a)-* and the verb *tarwanaza-*, by providing a complete list of all the attestations within the Neo-Hittite corpus. Advantages and weaknesses of each theory are critically examined on the levels of both etymology and semantics. In conclusion, the hypothesis of a connection to the Hittite verb *tarh(u)-* is reconsidered in light of the data we now possess about Anatolian and Luwian morphology and phonology.

Keywords: *tarwanis*, Iron Age, Hieroglyphic Luwian, Neo-Hittite, IUDEX

Occurrences

The first occurrences of the title *tarwanis* (also expressed by Hieroglyphic ideogram *371: IUDEX/IUSTITIA) in the 10th century Neo-Hittite city of Karkemiš² clearly show that the meaning of the word is close to “ruler” (J. D. Hawkins (1995), 112): the title is first borne by monarchs belonging to a new dynasty, that from the name of its first member is called House of Suhis (J. D. Hawkins (2000), 78ff.), and its diffusion will spread, either from Karkemiš or from a common source, all over the Iron age Luwian states of Syria and Anatolia. A list of all occurrences (alphabetically ordered by the names of the inscriptions) will show that, with few local exceptions, *tarwanis* is attested from the 10th to the 8th century BCE, from the Tabal to Syria.

tarwani⁻³: AKSARAY § 9 IUDEX-*ni*; ANDAVAL § 1 IUDEX-*wa/i-ni-sa*; BABILONIA 1 § 1 (“IUDEX”)-*tara/i-wa/i-ni₂-sa*; BOR § 1 IUDEX-*ni-sa*; BOROWSKI 3 § 1 IUDEX-*wa/i-ni-i-sa*;

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² The very first occurrence is in Karkemiš A4b, see J. D. Hawkins (2000), 80.

³ Unclear form IUDEX-li-li with sign *263 is attested in Tell Taynat 1, Frgm. 2 l.3.

BOYBEYPINARI 1 § 1 IUDEX-*ni-sa*; BOYBEYPINARI 2 § 1 IUDEX-*ni-sa*₂; BULGARMADEN § 1 IUDEX-*ni-sa*; CEKKE Vo. § 1 IUDEX-*sa*; ÇİFTLIK § 22 IUDEX-[...]-*ni*-[...]; EĞİRKÖY § 3 (“IUDEX”) *tara/i-wa/i-ni-i-sa*; IZGIN 1 § 14 IUDEX-*ni-i-na*; KARKEMIŞ A/B § 1 IUDEX²-[...]; KARKEMIŞ A2 § 1 IUDEX-*sa*; KARKEMIŞ A4b § 6 IUDEX-*ni*; KARKEMIŞ A6 § 1 IUDEX-*ni-sa*; KARKEMIŞ A7 § 14 IUDEX-*ni*₂-*sa*; KARKEMIŞ A12 § 1 IUDEX-*ni*₂-*i-sa*; KARKEMIŞ A15b § 1 IUDEX-*ni-sa*; KARKEMIŞ A11a § 1 (“IUDEX”) *tara/i-wa/i-ni-sa*; KARKEMIŞ A11b+c § 1 IUDEX-*ni-i-sa*; KARKEMIŞ A14a IUDEX-*ni*₂-*sa* § 3; KARKEMIŞ A17b § 1 IUDEX-*ni-sa*; KARKEMIŞ A18a *tara/i-wa/i-ni*; KARKEMIŞ A27 frgms ee.ee* § 9 IUDEX³, ff.ff* § 9 IUDEX; KARKEMIŞ A31 § 7 IUDEX-*sa*; KELEKLI, § 1 IUDEX[...]; KULULU 3 § 1 IUDEX-*ni-sa*₄; KULULU 4 § 1 IUDEX-*ni*₂-*sa*; MALPINAR § 1 IUDEX-*ni-sa*, § 2 IUDEX-*ni-i*; MARAŞ 1 § 1.a (“IUDEX”) *tara/i-wa/i-ni-sa*₃, § 1.e (“IUDEX”) *-tara/i-wa/i-ni-sa*₂; MARAŞ 4 § 1 (“IUDEX”) *tara/i-wa/i-ni*₂-*sa*; MARAŞ 14 § 1 IUDEX-*ni-sa*; NIĞDE 2 § 1 IUDEX-*ni-sa*; TELL AHMAR 1 § 1 (“IUDEX”) *tara/i-wa/i-ni-sa*; TELL TAYNAT 2 § 1 IUDEX-*wa/i-ni-zi*.

tarwan(a)- and (IUSTITIA)wanali-: BULGARMADEN § 6 IUSTITIA-*na-ti*; KARATEPE 1, § 18 Hu. IUSTITIA-*na-ti* (Ho. IUSTITIA-*na-ri-i*); KARKEMIŞ A6 § 2 IUSTITIA-*na-ti*; KARKEMIŞ A11a § 4 IUSTITIA-*na-ti*; KARKEMIŞ A11b+c § 9 IUSTITIA-*wa/i-na-ti*; KARKEMIŞ A12 § 10 IUSTITIA-*ni-ti-i*; KULULU 3 § 1 IUDEX-*na-ri-i-i*; MARAŞ 1 § 7 (“IUSTITIA”) *tara/i-wa/i-na-ra/i*; TELL TAYNAT 1, FRGM 1 L.2 IUDEX-*ti-i*.

tarwanaza- (verb): MARAŞ 1 § 6 *tara/i-wa/i-na-za-ta-*‘.

Historical background

Even though the meaning “ruler” is assured by the context of most inscriptions (J. D. Hawkins (1995), 112), the word *tarwanis* as well as the abstract substantive *tarwan(a)-* and the verb *tarwanaza-* are still problematic, since no cognates are known in the Anatolian family (including Hittite, Luwian, Palaic as well as Lycian and the other Luwian-related languages of the 1st millennium) and a (*Proto)-Anatolian etymology has not yet been discovered.

On the basis of the historical interpretations of Iron Age titles by H. Bossert (1927), 652 and F. Pintore (1983), a linguistic connection seems possible between *tarwanis*, the Greek title *tyrannos*, and Hebrew transposition of a Philistine title **seren*⁴, denoting a military leader at the time of king David.⁵ Even if this connection is true, we must observe that no convincing etymology has been found for either the Greek or the Hebrew substantive: in both cases, an exotic origin is given as very likely (J. Frisk (1973²), 946f.; L. Köhler – W. Baumgartner, (1958), 668). This lack of etymological explanations authorizes us to think that the original word that started the process and perhaps was borrowed by the peoples of Palestine and Hellas was actually the Luwian *tarwanis*.

⁴ Only the plural *sarne* is actually attested (L. Köhler – W. Baumgartner, *A.T. Lexikon*, 668). New evidence for a connection with *tarwanis* may come from the identification of the Neo-Hittite toponym *palas(a)tina/walas(a)tina* with Philistine, according to E. Rieken – I. Yakubovich (in press) and J. D. Hawkins (conference on the new Aleppo Inscription in Roma, 6th ICAANE, 07/05/2008).

⁵ See for instance 1 Ch. 2: 12, where the Philistine leaders betraying David during his revolt against king Saul bear the title *sarne*.

“On Account of My Justice”?

The common translation of *tarwanis*, used by J.D. Hawkins in his *Corpus* (2000), is “ruler”, the meaning being assured by the historical evidence of monarchs who bear the title. On the other hand, for the abstract substantive *tarwan(a)-*, the translation, always marked by italic as doubtful, oscillates between “rulership”⁶ and “justice”.⁷ The reason for this apparent incongruence is that in the bilingual of Karatepe 1 (§ 18) the Phoenician phrase *b-šdqy* corresponds to the Luwian ablative *amiyati tarwanati* (Karatepe 1 § 18 Hu., variant in Ho. is *tarwanari*, with rhotacism). The translation of the Phoenician phrase as “on account of my justice” leads to the assumption that the meaning of the Luwian text was literally the same.⁸

From *tar, “three”?

Accepting such an assumption, H. Eichner (1992) tried to explain the etymology of *tarwan(a)-* and *tarwanis* as deriving from numeral *tar, “three”. He proposed that the *tarwanis* meant actually “the third”⁹, so the third part in a process, the judge. This etymological explanation is very attractive, also because the syllabic *tarwanis* occurrences include the *tara/i-* sign (𐎢𐎢𐎣), which is composed by the numeral “3” (𐎢𐎢𐎣) combined with the thorn *-ra/i-* (𐎢). On the other hand, Eichner does not discuss the *tarwanaza-* causative verb, and he provides no clear explanation for the insertion of a semivowel *-w-*.

Moreover, no historical data point to evidence that the *tarwanis* was ever a judge, and almost all the basis of Eichner’s theory can be deconstructed. First of all, an Anatolian (and Luwian) word for “to judge” seems to exist. It is *ḫanna-* (H. C. Melchert (1993), 51), connected to the Hittite abstract *ḫannessar* (H. C. Melchert (1993), 51; HW²: 135ff., 149ff.), and it has nothing in common with *tarwan(a)-*. Even the use of the sign *-tara/i-* in the writing of the title does not imply that the word really derives from *tar, “three”, since the sign is merely phonetic and its use is not limited to *tarwanis*. Finally, regarding the occurrence in Karatepe 1 and the apparent correspondence to Phoenician *šdq*, it is impor-

⁶ See for instance J. D. Hawkins (2000), 447.

⁷ See for instance J. D. Hawkins (2000), 51.

⁸ The same assumption also leads to the conventional transcription of ideogram *371 with IUDEX/IU-STITIA. J. D. Hawkins (1995), 108ff. demonstrated that sign *371 is an Iron age version of Bronze age *277, used to write the title *T/Labarna* (*277-la). The British scholar (1995), 112²⁶ does not imply a linguistic connection between *tarwanis* and *T/Labarna*, but he also does not exclude it. Such a connection would be historically problematic (the Iron Age dynasties of *tarwanis* seem to be different from the last Dark Age families of monarchs who still use archaistic titles like MAGNUS.REX) and linguistically confusing, since it would imply a metathesis *taBARna* > *taRWAn-*, and a *-T-* initial consonant, although in the Iron Age personal names the form with *L* (*Labarna/Lubarna*, ¹IUDEX-la) survived (J. D. Hawkins (2000), 446.).

⁹ We should notice that in all its attested occurrences *tarwanis* is a title, and no single example exists of its use as a simple numeral adjective “third”.

tant to notice that the Phoenician version of the bilingual is not an exact translation of the Luwian text, hence it would be incorrect to think that the “justice” hypothesis is at all conclusive.

From *tarḥ(u)*-, “to be mighty”?

Following the idea that almost any lexical field connected to political power can produce good candidates in order to explain *tarwanis*, O. Carruba ((1989), 423f.) suggested that the form *tarwan(a)*- may derive from a verbal noun belonging to the paradigm of verb *tarḥ(u)*-, “to be mighty”.¹⁰ The suggestion is semantically interesting, and the loss of a laryngeal between *R* and *U* in Luwian is actually possible (H. C. Melchert (1994), 258). Still, the Italian scholar (1989) did not clearly explain whether he was thinking *tarwana*- was an Hittite word borrowed by Luwian or whether his idea was to directly reconstruct the verb **tarḥ(u)*- in Luwian, where it is not attested. A Hittite explanation is not acceptable, since the root *tarwan*- would necessarily belong to a *-r/-n* verbal noun, but in Hittite the genitive of *tarahḫuwar* is attested in the form *tarahḫuwas* and it is of course not heteroclite.¹¹

A Luwian reconstructed verb **tar(h)u*- would probably fit, since its verbal noun **taruwar*, once the laryngeal is lost, could actually generate the heteroclite ablative *tarwanati*, attested in the Neo-Hittite texts, although, as F. Starke (1990), 527ff. demonstrated, Luwian heteroclite nouns seem to have privileged a zero-grade form. By a zero-grade we should expect abl. **tarḫunati* instead of *tarwanati*, since before a vocalic *U* the laryngeal would be preserved. Analogical leveling of paradigm would be the sole possible explanation in order to reduce **tarwar/*tarhun*- to **tarwar/*tarwan*-, but no other examples of such a process are known.¹²

The verb *tarwanaza*-

A new element we also need to consider is the presence of the *tarwanaza*- verb. Before the publication of J. D. Hawkins’s *Corpus* (2000), the existence of such a verb, attested only in Maraš 1 § 6, was probably unknown to most of the scholars. The meaning of the verb, according to J. D. Hawkins’s analysis of the context (J. D. Hawkins (2000), 267), must almost surely be causative, and the proposed translation for the 3rd plural perfect *tarwanazanta* is “they made me ruler”.

Formally, the morphological structure of the verb is far from clear. Starting from right to left, we first find what may look like a deverbal imperfective *-za* suffix. If the analysis of such a suffix is correct, we must remember that according to H. C. Melchert (2003), 205f.,

¹⁰ Cfr. A. Kloekhorst (2008), 835ff.

¹¹ Cfr. A. Kloekhorst (2008), 835.

¹² It is worth noticing that, starting from the **tarḥ(u)*- verb, the *tarwan*- forms might also be analyzed as deverbative *-an-* stems (H. C. Melchert, Personal communication, November 12 2008; cfr. F. Starke (1990), 227.).

cfr. also I. Yakubovich (2008), 65 ff., Hieroglyphic Luwian *-za* generally corresponds to Cuneiform Luwian *-ssa* and to Hittite *-sk(e)*¹³. In this case, the deverbal *-za* should be preceded by a verbal form *tarwana-*, that we could analyze either as a form in *-ā-* on a *tarwan(a)-* basis or as a form in *-anna/i-* directly built on the verbal stem **tar(h)u-* (verbs in *-anna/i-ske* are seldom attested in Hittite, but no *anna/i-ssa* or *anna/i-za* verb is known either in Cuneiform or Hieroglyphic Luwian).

We also want to observe that the *-za* might also be no suffix at all, as in the case of the Lycian professional *-azz-* noun *kumaza-* “priest”, that generated an *-ā-* verb *kumazā* “to be a priest” (E. Laroche (1979), 99). An even more interesting parallel in Lycian is the verb *xssaθrapaza-*¹⁴, “to become Satrap” (H. C. Melchert (2004), 85) that seems to be formally quite close to *tarwanaza-*. In both cases, we can only theoretically analyze the verbs as *-ā-* formations on *-azz-* substantives, since no substantive **tarwanaza* or **xssaθrapaza* is attested.

Tarwanis and tarwana-

An important problem is also represented by the morphological difference between the abstract noun *tarwan(a)-* and the title *tarwanis*, both substantives and both evidently belonging to a same lexemic field. The former, if we accept a derivation from **tar(h)u*, would mean “might”; formally, the *-a-* vowel might either belong or not belong to the stem, since the ablative *tarwanati* can be constructed both on **tarwan-* and **tarwana-*. Aberrant ablatives in *-iti* are also attested (see occurrences listed above): those forms cannot be explained in a regular paradigm, and must be generated by the influence of the title *tarwanis*, apparently presenting a *-i-* theme.

Regarding the title, the *-i-* theme is probably just apparent, since the presence of a singular genitive in *-is* (for instance in BOYBEYPINARI 1, § 1: IUDEX-*ni-sa* FEMINA-*na-ti-sa*, “the wife of the *tarwanis*”) renders an adjectival *-(e)ya-* formation more plausible (R. Plöchl, (2003), 43).

Conclusion

A derivation of the title *tarwanis*, of the abstract noun *tarwan(a)-* and of the verb *tarwanaza-* from a common origin seems assured, but the assumption that the three words belong to the semantic field of “justice” is probably not founded. The proposal by O. Carruba (1989) of an etymology from *tarh(u)-* is almost convincing, although adjustments must be done to the linguistic steps of the derivation, which should not start from Hittite but rather from a reconstructed Luwian stem. Problems persist on a morphological level, since

¹³ The possible existence of a denominative *-aza-* suffix, discussed by F. Starke (1990), 102, is only based on Hieroglyphic Luwian verb *assaza-*. This *-aza-* could occur also in the case of *tarwan-aza*, but the phenomenon is still dubious and more examples of such a formation are required.

¹⁴ *Xanthos Trilingual*, I': *xssaθrapazate*; greek version has ξαδράπης ἐγένετο. See E. laroche (1979), 65.

the passage from a Luwian verb **tar(h)u* to the nominal stem *tarwan(a)-* is difficult to explain, but the semantic process generating a word for “ruler” from a word for “might” seems very plausible.

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Federico Giusfredi
 Institut für Assyriologie und Hethitologie
 Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München
 Geschwister-Scholl-Platz 1
 D - 80539 München