

Shaft-shedding Artemis and mind-voiding Ate: Hittite determinants of Greek etyma

Around mid-century, Vittore Pisani suggested repeatedly though in passing¹⁾ that Artemis' epic epithet *ιοχέαιρα* should be understood as 'arrow(s)-in-hand' and reconstructed as **iswo-ghesr-ya*, a compound recalling the Rig-Vedic *bahuvrīhi isu-hasta-* of the same meaning. The trigger was a reinterpretation of Gk. *χείρ* as reflecting **ghesr-* with reference to Hitt. *kessar-* 'hand' (rather than **gher-s-* connected with Skt. *hárati* 'grasp'). A few years later Alfred Heubeck²⁾ reinvented the same explanation at more elaborate length, learning of Pisani's antecedence only in the nick of time for a prefatory acknowledgment. This idea, which supplanted the traditional interpretation of *ιοχέαιρα* as 'arrow-shedder' (*ιός* + *χέω* 'pour'), has since been embraced by an astonishing array of scholars, e.g. Rüdiger Schmitt³⁾, Robert Beekes⁴⁾, Marcello Durante⁵⁾, Martin Peters⁶⁾, Jochem Schindler⁷⁾, Alan Nussbaum⁸⁾, Jean Catsanicos.⁹⁾ In this rush to newfangledness the few critical voices¹⁰⁾ have been effectively muted.

¹⁾ *Crestomazia indeuropea*² 142 (Torino, 1947); *Annuaire de l'Institut de philologie et d'histoire orientales et slaves* 10 (Bruxelles, 1950), 522; *Miscellanea Giovanni Galbiati III* (Milano, 1951), 5.

²⁾ *Beiträge zur Namenforschung* 7 (1956), 275–279.

³⁾ *Dichtung und Dichtersprache in indogermanischer Zeit* (Wiesbaden, 1967), 178–81.

⁴⁾ *The Development of the Proto-Indo-European Laryngeals in Greek* (The Hague, 1969), 279.

⁵⁾ *Sulla preistoria della tradizione poetica greca* 2 (*Incunabula Graeca* 64, Roma, 1976), 97.

⁶⁾ *Untersuchungen zur Vertretung der indogermanischen Laryngale im Griechischen* (Wien, 1980), 223–228.

⁷⁾ *Festschrift für Ernst Risch* (Berlin, 1986), 395–396.

⁸⁾ *Head and Horn in Indo-European* (Berlin, 1986), 241, 276–277.

⁹⁾ *Recherches sur le Vocabulaire de la Faute* (*Cahiers de N.A.B.U.* 2, Paris, 1991), 25.

¹⁰⁾ Walter Belardi, *Doxa* 3 (1950), 208; Ernst Fraenkel, *Lingua Posnaniensis* 4 (1953), 96; Pierre Chantraine, *Dictionnaire étymologique de la langue grecque* 467.

**Ghesr-* may indeed be the common denominator of *χείρ* and *kessar-*, rendering **iswo-ghesr-ya* as phonemically feasible as **iswo-ghewr-ya*. There are some formal problems with **iswo-ghesr-ya* which e.g. Peters took extensive note of, but which did not shake his faith in its correctness. The main reason for its widely purported cogency is the Rig-Vedic *isu-hasta-* which was claimed to be everything from "überzeugend" to "einleuchtend" and iconographically correct to boot for an "Indo-European deity" (*vide* Heiner Eichner).¹¹⁾

The implication is that *ιοχέαιρα* as a Greek compound matching *isu-hasta-* is of an archaic Indo-European *bahuvrīhi* type. This is, however, a precarious assumption. Unlike the more normal *bahuvrīhi*s (e.g. Gk. *τετρά-ποδ-* 'four-footed' and *ἀργυρό-πες* 'silver-footed', Skt. *cátus-pad-* 'four-footed' and *ṛkṣá-grīva-* 'bear-necked'), *isu-hasta-* is to all appearances a special Indo-Iranian subvariety. It is found only in Old Indic (e.g. Vedic *pátra-hasta-* 'cup-in-hand', *vájra-bāhu-* 'bolt-at-arm', *mádhu-jihva-* 'honey-on-tongue') and Old Iranian (e.g. Avest. *aēšmō-zasta-* 'kindling-in-hand'); forcing *ιοχέαιρα* as an assumed fossilized tertium comparationis to prove Indo-European status is purely circular. Rather than being a plausible "Indo-European type", *isu-hasta-* is more akin in kind to the inverted variant *āsánn-isu-* 'in-mouth-arrow(s)' or *divi-yoni-* 'in-heaven-womb' (i.e. 'having one's source in heaven'), where the locative nature of the first component is formally patent, and which does have a Greek parallel in compounds like *χαμαιεύνης* 'having one's bed on the ground'; *isu-hasta-* also means '(having) arrow(s) in hand' rather than 'having an arrow-hand', only the formal locativity of the second component has been overlaid by the adjectivization.

There is good reason to stick with the traditional explanation. A compound **iswo-ghewr-(ya)* 'arrow shed(der)' points ultimately to an archaic action noun **χέφαρ*¹²⁾ from *χέω* 'pour', similar to *πίαρ* 'fat(ness)' besides *πίων* 'fat': fem. *πίερα* (Skt. *ṛtīvā* : fem. *ṛtivarī*, verb *ṛtáyate* 'fill up') or **πέπαρ* 'ripeness' inferrable from *πέπων* 'ripe': fem. *πέπειρα* (verb *πεπ-* 'cook'); at the same time the compound integrates with feminine formations such as *πρῶρα* 'prow' (from **πρώφαρ-ια*, beside *πρών* 'headland' < **πρώφων*) or *γέραιρα*, *χίμαιρα*, *νείαιρα*.

¹¹⁾ Op. cit. in fn. 6, p. 224.

¹²⁾ Émile Benveniste, *Origines de la formation des noms en indo-européen* (Paris, 1935), 27.

On the semantic side, *χεύω* is a fit Homeric verb for describing an outpouring of throw-weapons (e.g. *Iliad* 5:618 *δούρατ' ἔχευαν*). That it may be equally apposite for a shower of arrows is evident from etymological ramifications in Hittite. The Hittite equivalent of Gk. *ῥός* (< **ῥός*), Skt. *ῥu-*, Avest. *iṣu-* 'arrow' is a noun **ishu* (*wa*)- (root seen in Vedic *iṣṇāti* 'impel'), from which is derived the denominative verb *ishurwai-* 'shed, throw, scatter, pour' which is used inter alia in passages such as *KUB* VII 54 III 19-21: EGIR-*anda-ma-kan* ^{GI}BAN *huittianzi nu-kan* GI.Ú.TAG.GA *tiyanzi* GI.Ú.TAG.GA.HI.A-*ma piran katta ishūwai* 'afterwards they stretch the bow and string the arrow, and it sheds forth arrows'. This Anatolian agenda for *Ἀρεμυς ἰοχέαιρα*, who made short work of the hexaple daughters of Niobe with a hail of arrows (*Iliad* 24: 606), surely outweighs the static image of an "arrow-holding" deity propped up solely at a distant remove by a strictly Indo-Iranian type of compound.

Jean Catsanicos (op. cit. in fn.9) postulated an Indo-European **H₂wem-* (*H₂* = *a*-coloring laryngeal) as meaning 'fail' and saw its threefold outcomes in Hitt. *wast(a)-* 'fail', Gk. *ἀ(φ)άομαι* 'commit a fault', and Goth. *un-wamms* 'ἄμωμος, blameless'. On this formal basis he compiled what amounts to an elaborate phrase grammar of cultic and legal formulas of putative Indo-European origin, dealing centrally with the imputation, avowal, and disposal of guilty behavior. The study, rich in detail, captured many a striking parallel of religiously or juridically tinged vocabulary and conceptuality in Hittite and Greek, expectably so in two adjacent ancient cultures which for a while impinged on one another in Western Anatolia. More questionable was the Indo-European angle, the staking of the common denomination upon a theoretical root-construct of notable brittleness, with a weak and marginal tertium (Germanic). One gets a feeling that more is at stake in the formulas than the postulated reconstruct makes allowance for, from page one onward. That very first page, in footnote 1, summarily rejects the current etymology for *wast(a)-* (by Sturtevant and Laroche) which tied it in with Lat. *vāstus*, Old Irish *fās*, and OHG *wuosti* 'empty, waste', with reference to Eichner's dissertation (whose own connection of *wast(a)-* with Skt. *vāma-*, ON *vinstri* 'left' [hand] Catsanicos also dismissed in the process).

It is more than likely that the guilt- and sin-laden meanings of *wast(a)-* are a specialization of legal and religious vocabulary. They

may well be formulaically old, but that does not perforce make them semantically primary. The use of *wast(a)-* for 'miss (a target)' in shooting (as opposed to *hazziya-* '[score a] hit') strongly argues for a basic meaning of 'draw a blank', thus not 'fail' or 'err' but simply 'come up empty' (with blame or recrimination or guilt secondarily seeping into the vacuum). Similarly in Greek *ἀμαρτάνω* also means primarily 'miss the mark' (like *ἀστοχέω*) and secondarily 'fail, err, sin'. The noun *wastais* or *wastul* originally signifies precisely 'emptiness, vacuum', and the phrase *sallis wastais* of the mortuary rites means simply 'royal vacancy, interregnum' (cf. *salli hassatar* 'great [= royal] family', *salli hussil* 'main dump'), as in *mān* ^{URU}*Hattusi sallis wastais kisari nassu-za* LUGAL-*us nasma* SAL.LUGAL-*as* DINGIR-LIM-*is kisari* 'if at Hattusas an interregnum occurs, (if) either king or queen becomes a deity (= departs this world)' (*KUB* XXX 16 I 1-2). 'Failure, fault, error, sin' are all secondary meanings, as are 'devastation, despoliation, blight'.

In view of all the material assembled by Catsanicos one may fairly ask whether *ἀ(φ)άομαι* 'be deluded, err' and the cognate noun *ἄτη* < **ἄφατā* may still be etymologically connected with *wast(a)-* by a different reconstruction. A person subject to *ἄτη* was typically *mente vacuus*, because *φρένας ἐξέλετο Ζεύς*, as Agamemnon claims in *Iliad* 19: 137, to the accompaniment of *ἄασάμην* and (ibid. 136) *Ἄτης, ἥ πρῶτον ἄασθην*. These forms may be subsumed under a root *Eew-A-* (*e* and *a* coloring laryngeals respectively), thus **ἄφατā* < **EwA-tā*, **ἄφασ-* < **EwA-s-*. The privative verbal adjective from the same root was **ἡ-EwA-tos* 'not coming up empty, failproof, unerring', yielding in Greek **ἄφρατος* (cf. *ἄδνος* < **ἄφῆδνος*). This form was in epic diction distinct from *ἄ(h)ατος* < **ἡ-IsA-tos* 'insatiate', having at the same time lost visible marking of privativity vis-à-vis *ἀ(φ)άομαι*. The Homeric text tended to contract *ἄατος* to *ἄτος*, and conversely to reassert visible privativity in **ἄφ(ῆ)ατος* vs. *ἀ(φ)άομαι* by the nonce form *ἄἄ(φ)ατος*, which by an excess of tribrach-elimination came to scan either *υ-υ* (Odyssey) or even *υ-υ-υ* (*Iliad*). By contrast, later Greek has a regular *bahuvrīhi* from *ἄτη* (*ἄν-ατος*, Arcadian *αναατος*, Elean *αναατορ*) with the newer technical meaning 'guiltproof, immune'. Lat. *vāstus* and its Celtic and Germanic cognates go back to **Ew-éA-s-t-*, while Hitt. *wast(a)-* may alternatively reflect **Ew-oA-s-t-* (in view of its *-hi* conjugation stem) or **EwA-s-t-*. A different derivation is seen in Lat. *vānus* 'empty' (< **EwéA-n-*), Skt. *ūnā-* 'lacking' (< **EuA-n-*), and Gk. *εὐνής* 'deprived' (< **EewA-n-*).

In this manner most of Catsanicos' material may be salvageable and valuable for both formal and substantive comparison. At the same time the reconstruct **H₂wem-* seems to me to merit its assigned gloss 'failli'.

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Ved. *niṣkā* 'Brustschmuck'

Studien zur Wortkunde des Kāṭhaka II

Das Wort *niṣkā*- ist im Kāṭhaka nur einmal belegt, und dies in einem Mantra, der mit zahlreichen Varianten auch im Atharvaveda (AVŚ 7.99.1) und Taittirīya-Brāhmaṇa (TB 3.7.5.13) anzutreffen ist¹⁾. Die ältesten Belege finden sich jedoch im Ṛgveda und dort an folgenden Stellen: RV 1.126.2, 2.33.10, 8.47.15²⁾. Wie ein Blick ins PW s.v. zeigt, lebt das Wort in klassischer Zeit fort, und auch in den Volkssprachen ist es reichlich bezeugt³⁾. Hingegen fehlt jede Spur auf iranischer Seite⁴⁾. Somit hat man das Wort als eine rein inner-indische Bildung zu betrachten, was hinsichtlich der Etymologie des Wortes, über die bislang Unklarheit herrscht (Mayrhofer, Etym. Wb. s.v. [„vielleicht Fremdwort“] und Nachträge S.747⁵⁾)), von Belang ist.

Den Quellen kann man entnehmen, daß es sich beim *niṣkā* um eine Art (silberner oder auch goldener) Halsreif handelt⁶⁾. Die Epi-

¹⁾ Kāth 31.14: 16.14/5 *stṛṇṇā barhiḥ paridhatta vedīm + jāmiṃ mā himsīr amuyā śāyānām / darbhaiḥ stṛṇṇā haritais suvarṇair niṣkā ete yajamānasya santu* (~ AVŚ 7.99.1 *pāri stṛṇṇi pāri dhehi vediti mā jāmiṃ moṣīr amuyā śāyānām / hotṛśā-danam hāritam hiraṇyāyaṃ niṣkā ete yajamānasya loké*, TB 3.7.5.13 *abhi stṛṇṇi ... mā himsīr śāyānā / hotṛśādanā hāritāḥ suvarṇāḥ niṣkā ime yajamānasya bradhne*).

²⁾ Alle drei Verse sind von R. Stuhmann, Der Traum in der altindischen Literatur, Tübingen 1982, S. 30–39, besprochen. Inhaltlich ausführlich ist der letzte Vers (RV 8.47.15 „Wenn man [im Traume] sich selbst einen Brustschmuck oder gar einen Kranz anlegt, o Tochter des Himmels, ...“) diskutiert.

³⁾ Siehe Sheth, Pāiasaddamahāṇṇavo s.v. *nikkha-*, PED s.vv. *nikkha-/nekkha-* und CDIAL 7470.

⁴⁾ Der Versuch Baileys (BSOAS 23 [1960] 23), das Wort an eine Wurzel (iran.) **naiz-*, (ind.) **neṣ-* anzuschließen, darf auf sich beruhen bleiben.

⁵⁾ Dort wäre noch Stuhmanns Etymologie von *niṣkā*- (Stuhmann, op. cit. S. 34 ff.) [*< ni-ṣac-* 'eng verbunden sein'] hinzuzufügen. Doch vermag diese m. E. ob semantischer Schwächen nicht zu überzeugen. Das von Stuhmann zur Stützung seiner Etymologie herangezogene *panniṣka-/pādaniṣka-* 'am Fuß getragener Niṣka' ist erstmals und singulär in der Kāśikā (ad Pāṇ 6.3.56) belegt und daher möglichst aus der Argumentation zu lassen (anders Stuhmann, op. cit. S. 34).

⁶⁾ Vgl. Rau, Metalle und Metallgeräte im vedischen Indien, AWLM 1973.8,