

The Hittite Word for "Woman" Again

In Hittite texts the word for "woman" is always written with the logogram SAL.¹⁾ The Hittite pronunciation of the word is therefore not known. Phonetic complements like SAL-*za*, nom. sg., and SAL-*ni*, dat. sg., SAL-*na-aš*, gen. sg., show that the stem ends in *n*, presumably a consonantal stem with the nominative ending in *-ns*. In 1990 Erich Neu published an article entitled "Das hethitische Wort für 'Frau'" (HS 103, 208-217). Starting from Luwian *wana-* and IE **g^{en}-* he posited a Hittite stem **kwin-* which he thought to have found in *kwinnaššan* in KUB XII 60 I 24. He interpreted this form as *kwinna* (acc.) with the enclitic possessive pronoun *-šan* "his woman." In HS 105 (1992) 1-3, "Ist das hethitische Wort für 'Frau' gefunden?," I rejected this interpretation because it does not fit the context. I proposed instead to analyze the form as *kwinna* "quem-que" with the same possessive pronoun, "his everyone" in the sense of "everyone of it". This resulted in a translation better suited for the situation. I was, of course, aware of the fact that a combination of the generalizing pronoun with the possessive was otherwise not attested. Neu cited Stefanini for the same interpretation which he rejected.²⁾ Besides, H. A. Hoffner interpreted the passage in the same way in his translation of the myths.³⁾ I translate the passage as follows. (The Stormgod has to pay the brideprice for the daughter of the Seagod whom his son had married.) "He gave him everything thousandfold (lit. as a thousand), he gave him one thousand oxen, he gave him one thousand sheep." I explain the common gender of the pronoun by the fact that it refers to the animals. E. Neu wrote me that he accepted my interpretation.

Recently Onofrio Carruba took the question up again (HS 106,

¹⁾ I prefer this traditional rendering of the sign to the now fashionable Sumerian reading MUNUS. - I wish to thank Harry Hoffner for his help in writing this article.

²⁾ HS 103 (1990), p. 213, n. 19. Ruggero Stefanini, "Note Ittite", AGI 54 (1969), pp. 148-164, esp. 162-164.

³⁾ Harry A. Hoffner, *Hittite Myths*, SBL Writings from the Ancient World Series, volume 2 (1990), p. 26.

1993, 262-271). Under the title "Hethitisch *kuinna-* 'Frau'; *kuwanša-* 'weiblich' und anderes" he discusses two related subjects. One is the form *kuinnaššan* again for which he wants to rescue Neu's interpretation. His arguments against my view are easy to refute. He claims that if *-šan* followed the vowel *a* the *š* should not have been doubled. That this is not so is shown by writings like *pí-di-iš-ši* = *pídi + ši* "in his/its place", *kattišši* or even *nušši*. Secondly he thinks that "everyone of it" should have been neuter in Hittite. He overlooks the fact that the phrase refers to the animals, who are naturally common gender. His main argument is, of course, the fact that no other example for the combination of the two pronouns is attested. But this does not prove that it cannot have existed. Besides, the combination "his woman" was not used in Hittite.

Carruba's own interpretation of the passage is not convincing. He takes *kuinnaššan* as gen. pl. "of his women" and reads. "He gave him a thousand of his women." Thereafter he reconstructs the logogram for "young men". However, the signs as copied by Ehelolf are clearly *pa-a*, not the sign KAL; the word GURUŠ "young man" is written LÚ.KAL, not KAL alone. Carruba renders the passage (my English): "[he gave] him a thousand of his women [and a thousand young men], he gave him one thousand oxen, and he gave him one thousand sheep." The idea that the Stormgod had so many women at his disposal is highly improbable, and even more so that he should have used them as a means of payment like the cattle and sheep.

The other subject of Carruba's article is the word *kuwanša-*, for which he proposes the meaning "woman" or "female". It occurs in the form *kuwanšeš*, nom. pl., and probably also *kuwaššaš*, dat. pl. with assimilation. It is always preceded by the sign DINGIR. Carruba renders it D(INGIR) in order to show the ambiguity that the sign might be either the word "deity" or the determinative of divine names. In the following I shall express the same ambiguity by writing D. *kuwanšeš*, etc.

For details Carruba refers to his article in the Klíma Memorial.⁴⁾ This volume reached Chicago only in the Fall of 1994, but the article must have been written as early as 1990, since Neu's article is cited there only as addendum.

Among the examples adduced there the most persuasive is KUB XLIII 30 III 5'-12' with duplicates. This is part of a list of deities

⁴⁾ Petr Vavroušek, ed., *Iranian and Indo-European Studies: Memorial Volume of Otakar Klíma* (Praha 1994), pp. 1-25.

grouped in pairs by the formula "god X, with him god Y." In some places *kattišši* "with him" is replaced by KI.MIN "ditto." Beginning with line 8 we read: [^DSIN-aš] *katt*]iššima ^DIšpanazašepaš [^DIlašša) *ka*]ttiššima ^DIlaššiš [(D.pišeneš)] *kattišmima* ^DMaliyaš [(^DMaliy)]aš *kattiššima* D.pišeneš [^Dwa(aškuw)]attaššiš D.kuwanšeš "The Moon-god, with him the Goddess of the Night; the deified Hearth, with him the deity of the Courtyard; the male gods, with them Maliya; Maliya, with her the male gods; ^Dwaškuwattaššiš D.kuwanšeš" (end of paragraph).

Carruba (l.c. p.16 ff.) devotes a long discussion to the last two items. It is clear that *kuwanšeš* is nom. pl., *Waškuwattaššiš* is nom. sg. of a Luwian adjective of belonging, ending in -ašši-, replacing the genitive. A noun *waškuwat-* is not attested, but can be understood as a formation like *aniyat-* or *kartimmiyat-* from *wašku-*. This would yield the meaning "He of Transgression" as name of a god; thus Carruba "Gott der Verfehlung". He considers D.*kuwanšeš* as counterpart to D.*pišeneš*, "female deities" against "male gods." The fact that the two names are not connected by *kattišši* renders the contrast less certain. Nevertheless Carruba's definition of *kuwanša-* may be correct.

The other examples adduced by him do not seem to contradict the proposed meaning.

One factor in defining the meaning of *kuwanša-* seems to have been its similarity to the stem of the Hittite word for "woman", for which he here posits the stem *kuwan-*.⁵⁾ The spelling *ku-wa* for the sequence *kwa* is attested in *kuwanša-*. It is also found in *ku-wa-at* "why?" in contrast to *ku-it* "what," compared with Latin *quod* and *quid*. For the suffix -ša- in *kuwanša-* a parallel may be found in *antuḫša-* beside *antuwaḫḫa-* "human being, person," as Carruba also has seen. I cannot here comment on his further explanations; I only want to mention one point:

Carruba misunderstands the writing SAL-*anza*, as did Starke (KZ 94, 1980, 75 ff.) and Neu. This is not a derivative with -*anza*. Such derivatives are mostly formed from neuter nouns, if they are the subject of a transitive verb in the active; Laroche called them "ergatif," others say "Personifikation." Such a formation would not be in place in the word for "woman." The only attestation of SAL-*anza* is KUB XXX 29 obv. 1 (birth ritual):

⁵⁾ Cf. Jaan Puhvel, "Philology and Etymology with Focus on Anatolian" *Trends in Linguistics* 58 (1992), pp. 262 ff., esp. p. 264 **guan-s*, gen. **guan-as*.

[*ma-a-an-za*] SAL-*an-za* ḫa-a-ši "[When] a woman gives birth" (ed. Beckman StBoT 29, 22 f.). Obviously this is the same as *mānza* SAL-*za* ḫaši of other birth rituals, e.g. KBo XVII 60 (StBoT 29 p. 60) and KUB XVII 28 (ibid. p. 84) and *takku* SAL-*za* ḫaši in birth omens (K. K. Riemschneider, StBoT 9 passim). I always considered -*an-za* as an extended phonetic complement rendering the last and the penultimate syllabic signs, just like SAL-*na-aš* or ME-*an-zi*. This was also seen by Beckman who lists SAL-*an-za* as nom. sg. on p. 316. This phonetic complement clearly shows that the Hittite word had the vowel *a* in its root. I think that we may safely reconstruct the Hittite word for "woman" as **kuwanza*, gen. **kuwa(n)naš* from the stem **kuwan-*, and put *kuinna-* to rest.

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