

Kamrušepa and the Sheep of the Sun-God

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In the Telepinu myth, the god, with his disappearance, provokes the paralysis of men, animals, and nature, and threatens the very survival of the gods. When the bee finds him and stings him, he becomes even more angry¹. Then a ritual is performed to appease him. But the god is still angry. Version 1, KUB XVII 10, runs as follows:

(II 33-36, III 1-2) Telepinu came in his fury. Lightning flashed, it thundered while the dark earth was in turmoil. Kamrušepa saw him and moved [with] the eagle's wing. She stopped it, namely, anger. She stopped it, the wrath. She stopped [sin]. She stopped sullenness.

(III 3-7) Then Kamrušepa says to the gods: "Go, O gods! See! Bring the Sun-God's sheep to Hapantali² and select twelve rams, so that I will treat Telepinu's *karaš*-grains. I have taken a basket with a thousand eyes (i.e. a sieve with many holes), and I have poured *karaš*-grains upon the rams of Kamrušepa.

(III 8-12) I have made a burning over and off Telepinu, from one side and from the other side. And I have taken from Telepinu, from his body, his evil; I have taken his sin; I have taken his anger; I have taken his wrath; I have taken his ire; I have taken his sullenness."

(III 13-16) When Telepinu was angry, his soul and his heart were stifled (like) brushwood. Just as they burned these sticks of brushwood, may the anger, wrath, sin, and sullenness of Telepinu likewise burn up.

The celebration of the ritual — it is said — begins immediately after the finding of Telepinu (col. II x+1-32) with magic formulae that are also invocations to move the god: "Here [lie] figs. Just as [a fig] is sweet, so let [your soul], Telepinu, become sweet in the same way" (II 16-18). But it is Kamrušepa who establishes

¹The classification according to various versions of the fragments preserving the myth, and the ritual connected with it, is owed to H. Otten, *Die Überlieferungen des Telepinu-Mythus* (MVAeG 46, 1; Leipzig 1942). The texts have been transliterated by E. Laroche, *RHA* 23 (1965) 88-110. A first translation has been given by A. Goetze, *ANET*² (1955) 126-128. For recent translations, see H. A. Hoffner Jr., *Hittite Myths* (Atlanta 1990) 14-20; F. Pecchioli Daddi - A. M. Polvani, *La mitologia ittita* (Brescia 1990) 71-87 (with a bibliography at p. 72).

The episode of the bee is preserved in its entirety only in the third version.

²Goetze, *ANET*² 127, followed by many scholars, translates: "Hapantali is shepherding the Sun-god's sheep." And Laroche, *RHA* 23 (1965) 94, transliterates: *ū[-e-ši-ja]*, but *Ḫa-pa-an-ta-li* does not have the nominative ending. Hoffner, *Myths* 16, translates: "Now tend the Sun God's sheep for Hapantali."

the magic action with which to make the ritual effective³. Twelve rams are chosen from the Sun-God's flocks. They are prepared in a way that is not entirely clear to us. Then, it seems that these victims are burned. The difficulties of interpretation are mostly lexical in nature since it is not certain that *kar-aš-šu-uš* (II. 5, 6) is a spelling of *kar-aš*, a kind of cereal⁴. The transcription of the crucial passage is the following:

- III 3 ^DKam-ru-še-pa-aš DINGIR^{MES}-na-aš EGIR-pa te-e-ez-zi i-it[-ten-wa]
 4 DINGIR^{MES} ka-a-aš-ma ^DḪa-pa-an-ta-li ^DUTU-aš UDU^{ḪA}-šu ū[-...]
 5 na-aš-ta 12 UDU.NITA^{ḪA} kar-aš-te-en nu ^DTe-li-bi-nu-wa-aš k[ar-
 aš-š]u-uš
 6 a-ni-ja-mi da-a-aḫ-ḫu-un-za pāt-tar 1 LI-IM IGI^{ḪA}-wa nu-uš-ša[-an]
 kar-aš-šu-uš
 7 ŠA ^DKam-ru-še-pa UDU.NITA^{ḪA}-šu iš-ḫu-u-uh-ḫu-un

The same formulation is found in the parallel text of the Disappearance of the Storm-God, KUB XXXIII 28(+) III, in an extremely fragmentary passage that preserves only the last two lines, restored according to KUB XVII 10 III 6-7⁵:

- x+1 [da]-a[ḫ-ḫu-un-za pāt-tar 1 LI-IM IGI^{ḪA}-wa nu-uš-ša-an kar-aš-šu-uš]
 7 [ŠA] ^DKam-[ru-še-pa UDU.NITA^{ḪA}-šu iš-ḫu-u-uh-ḫu-un]

And the ritual that follows is the same one as that in the Disappearance of Telepinu.

There is another parallel text of this mythological section, KBo VIII 73 II (restored according to KUB XVII 10 III 3-5)⁶:

- x+1 ^DKam-ru-še-pa-aš-ša DINGIR^{MES}-aš EGI[(R-pa te-e-ez-zi i-it-ten-wa
 DINGIR^{MES}-eš)]
 2 ka-a-aš-ma ^DḪa-ba-an-ta-[(i ^DUTU-aš UDU^{ḪA}-šu ū)-...]
 3 nu-kán 12 UDU.NITA^{MES} kar-aš-te-e[(n nu ^DTe-li-bi-nu-wa-aš
 k)ar-aš-š(u-uš)]
 4 a-ni-ja-at- [ten]
 5 [Š]AG.DU-SÚ ḫa-la-aš-ša-an ta[-ak-ki]
 6 [ŠA]G.KI-ša-aš-ša-an ḫa-an-z[a-... ta-ak-ki UZU^{KIR}-šu]

³There is no reason to see in this sequence two purifications of Telepinu, one by a mortal and one by Kamrušepa, as G. Kellermann thinks, in: H. A. Hoffner Jr. - G. M. Beckman (ed.), *Kaniššuwat: A Tribute to H. G. Güterbock on his Seventy-fifth Birthday* (AS 23; Chicago 1986) 118-120). In the narration, the sequence of events follows a logic proper to the text, and the ritual passes from the human sphere to the divine, then again returning to the human.

⁴A first important contribution to understanding this passage has been made by M. Popko, *JCS* 26 (1974) 181-182, who saw that *pāt-tar 1 LI-IM IGI^{ḪA}-wa* means "sieve (of) a thousand eyes". This identification makes it probable that *kar-aš-šu-uš* refers to *kar-aš*, a cereal, here "*karaš*-grains", despite the fact that this term is probably an s-stem neuter. The passage is translated in this way by both Hoffner, *Myths* 16, who at first had rejected this interpretation (H. A. Hoffner Jr., *Alimenta Hethaeorum* [New Haven 1974] 74-75), and Pecchioli Daddi - Polvani, *Mitologia* 81. Haas, *Or* 40 (1971) 421, derived this term from *karš*- "to select".

⁵Transliteration by Laroche, *RHA* 23 (1965) 117. Last translations: Hoffner, *Myths* 22; Pecchioli Daddi - Polvani, *Mitologia* 99.

⁶This fragment has been transliterated and translated by Haas, *Or* 40 (1971) 422-423.

- 7 [UZ]^UKIR₁₄ UZU a-iš-ši-it [UZU a-iš-ši-it' ta-ak-ki]
 8 [hur-h]u-uš-šu-uš hu-ur-hu-... ta-ak-ki]
 9 [UZU]h[a-aḫ-ri-iš-ši UZU[h[a-aḫ-ri-... ta-ak-ki UZU]ge-e-nu-uš-...]
 10 [UZU]ge-e]-nu-uš-ši-it ta-a[k-ki]

(II x+1-4) Then Kamrušepa [says] to the gods: "[Go, O gods!] See! [Bring] [the Sun-God's sheep] to Ḫapantali, select twelve rams, and treat Telepinu's *karasḫ*-grains.

(II 5-10) Its head matches his head; its forehead matches his forehead; its nose (matches) the nose; its mouth [matches his mouth]; its throat matches his throat; [its lung matches] his lung; its knee matches [his] knee."

This version does not contain the short description of how the rams were to be prepared, and replaces the 1 sg. of the present with the 2 pl. of the imperative: "(select... and) treat...!"⁷ Therefore, the goddess herself does not perform the ritual, but enjoins that the ritual be performed according to her instructions. And this time the ritual is different: each part of the body of the person to be purified is made to correspond to that of the animal to be sacrificed so that the sickness may be eliminated⁸.

A variation of the theme of Kamrušepa and the Sun-God's sheep is found in the short mythological section of another ritual, KUB XII 26 II, which — in contrast to those considered up to now — does not resort to the well-known mythical element of an angry god who disappears and who must be appeased⁹.

- 1 PUTU-uš-wa ^DKam-ru-ši-pa-aš-ša UDU^HA ki-iš-kán-zi
 2 nu-wa-ra-at-za-kán ḫa-an-na-(an-)ta-ti nu-wa-ra-at-za-kán
 3 ša-a-an-ta-ti nu-wa-za ^DKam-ru-ši-pa-aš-ša AN.BAR ^{GI}GA.ZA
 4 da-a-is nu-wa-aš-ša-an A.BAR ^{GI}GA.ZUM SÍG
 5 da-a-iš nu-wa-kán šu-up-pl-in AŠ.SAL.GAR-an
 6 ki-iš-ši-ir nu-wa-ra-an pi-iš-ši-ir
 7 nu-wa-ra-an-kán ar-ri-ir nu-wa-ra-an
 8 :am-ma-aš-ša-an-da nu-wa-ra-an A-NA DUMU.LÚ.U₁₉.LU
 9 a-ni-ja-u-wa-an-zi ḫar-kir nu DUMU.LÚ.U₁₉.LU
 10 12 UZU^UR^HA-ŠU an-ni-eš-kán-zi
 11 nu-wa-ra-an EGIR-pa a-li-ja-aš la-ga-na-aš
 12 e-eš-ša-an-zi nu-wa-ra-an EGIR-pa AMA-ni
 13 DUMU-an e-eš-ša-an-zi
 14 ša-ra-a-wa-kán ne-pl-ša-aš ^DUTU-uš ú-it
 15 nu-wa-aš-ši EGIR-an nu-un-tar-nu-ut IGI-an-da
 16 ^DKam-ru-ši-pa-aš nu-un-tar-nu-ut nu-wa-ra-an
 17 EGIR-pa AMA-ni DUMU-an i-e-er

⁷ Less likely it is a 3 sg. of the preterit: "she (Kamrušepa) treated...".

⁸ This kind of ritual has been studied by Haas, *Or* 40 (1971) 410-430.

⁹ See A. Goetze, *The Hittite Ritual of Tunnawi* (AOS 14; New Haven 1938) 88-89; Laroche, *RHA* 23 (1965) 168-169 (transliteration); cfr. Haas, *Or* 40 (1971) 423-424.

The Luwian word *ammassa/i-* "to wipe (dry)" (1. 8), has been explained by H. Craig Melchert, *Historische Sprachforschung* 101 (1988) 211-214.

(1-10) The Sun-God and Kamrušepa are combing the sheep. They contended and enraged at each other. Kamrušepa set up an iron chair and placed thereupon a wool-comb of lead. They combed a pure female kid; they rubbed it; they washed it; they wiped it and they held it ready for a mortal for performing a ritual. And they are treating the twelve parts of the body of the mortal.

(11-13) They make him again one of an *a*.'s disposition, they make him again a son to (his) mother.

(14-17) The Sun-God of Heaven came up, und he hurried after him (i.e. the mortal), Kamrušepa hurried toward him, and they restored him as a son to his mother.

The Sun fights with Kamrušepa while they are tending the sheep. The reason for their anger is not given, just as it is not given in the myths of the disappearance of Telepinu and of other deities. What is important is that Kamrušepa is able to overcome that moment of crisis and to make peace with the Sun. The harmony that returns among the gods must also be reestablished among men. Kamrušepa places the wool comb on the throne because it is the instrument that, just as it combs away with its teeth the impurities from the lamb's wool, must comb away the sicknesses afflicting mankind. This magic practice is clarified by a Luwian birth ritual, also celebrated by Kamrušepa, KUB XXXV 88 III 13-17, duplicate XXXV 89 12-14: "(The midwife) lifted up the child. She, Kamrušepa, takes the nine combs (saying): 'The following sicknesses have to be combed away: the sicknesses of the head, the sicknesses of the eyes, the sicknesses of the ears, the sicknesses of the mouth, the sicknesses of the throat, the sicknesses of the hands!' And she treats all of the body parts in order."¹⁰

This time "a pure female kid" is selected from the flock, and the gods prepare together what will be the sacrificial victim for the ritual to be performed. Only slight mention is made of the type of ritual. As in the preceding text, the animal is the substitute for the destinee of the ritual, and each of the twelve parts of its body will stand for the corresponding part of the man's. Just as the two deities have made peace, through the direct intervention of Kamrušepa and the Sun, that person will once again enjoy good relations with his mother and will no longer be hostile.

Kamrušepa has been recognized as the goddess of healing and magic¹¹. And this is so because it is she who creates the rituals, which then become available to man. These rituals are justified by the fact that *in illo tempore* they were celebrated by the goddess. Kamrušepa's capabilities are recognized by the other gods. They also turn to her in time of need. In KUB VII 1 + KBo III 8 III 1 ff.: "The Great River bound its swells, and by so doing bound the fish in the water, bound..., bound (even) the throne of the Tutelary-God. And Ištar, you tell it to

¹⁰ See G. M. Beckman, *Hittite Birth Rituals* (StBot 29; Wiesbaden 1983) 229-230; F. Starke, *Die keilschrift-luwischen Texte in Umschrift* (StBot 30; Wiesbaden 1985) 207, 227-228.

¹¹ A. Goetze, *Kleinasien*² (München 1957) 134: "die Heilgöttin"; E. Laroche, *RHA* 7 (1946-47) 67-68: "déesse de la Santé". For further literature, see O. R. Gurney, *Some Aspects of Hittite Religion* (The Schweich Lectures of the British Academy 1976; Oxford 1977) 16 with note 5.

the goddess Malija; and Malija told it to the god Pirwa; and Pirwa told it to Kamrušepa. Kamrušepa harnessed her horses and went to the Great River. Kamrušepa is conjuring the Great River..."¹²

The first four of the rituals mentioned here require the sacrifice of one or more animals. Kamrušepa assumes the responsibility of prescribing the selection of the victims from the flocks of the Sun-God of Heaven. It is she who *founds* those rituals.

The mythical theme of procuring the sacrificial victims by taking them from a divine sphere is common to various cultures. What comes to mind immediately, limiting ourselves to Greek mythology is the theft of Apollo's herd of oxen by young Hermes, as is narrated in the Homeric Hymn to Hermes; and, again, the oxen of Augeas, son of Helios, or those of Geryon. As in some of the Greek myths, in Hittite mythology animals were taken from the Sun, the star that sees everything, and therefore to whom the extensive pastures belong. Sacrifice deprives a living being of life. It is such a grave act that it must be institutionalized by a deity¹³. In fact, it is Hermes who, by killing the oxen stolen from Apollo, invents the sacrifice and shows man how to perform it¹⁴.

If the sacrifice finds legitimacy in its being founded by a god, the hunt, inasmuch as it also violently deprives animals of life, must also be ritualized. This concept, common to all hunting cultures, also finds clear traces among the Hittites. During a religious ceremony, the KILAM festival, which goes back to the Old Hittite period, the king sits at the palace door and a cortege parades in front of him made up of: 1) processional carts pulled by oxen; 2) ten dancers, of whom one is ritually nude; 3) two priests (one of whom called "pure") of Inar/KAL, the tutelary-deity of wild animals and the hunt; 4) ten or twenty game-bags, one of the symbols for Inar; and 5) the "animals of the gods", that is, a leopard and a wolf made of silver; a gold lion; two wild boars, one made of lapis-lazuli and one made of silver; a silver bear; and finally, four silver and gold deer, all of which are pulled, which gives an idea of their size¹⁵.

According to a parallel text (1.j col. VI), after the animals have reached "their places", the hunters, LÚ^{MES} UR.GI₇, arrive, who prostrate themselves in front of the king and then take their places. Then, there is the ceremony of "drinking the gods". The royal couple drinks the Storm-God and Wašezzili, and the silver vases are in the form of the head of a bull, the animal sacred to the Storm-God. The smiths presenting these vases receive a recompense. Then the king and the queen drink the tutelary-deities Inar and Ḫapantali from zoomorphic vessels brought from the temple of Inar. The effigies of the "animals of the god" (according to a Middle Hittite version, 3.a, some wine is poured over the leopard and one of the boars),

¹² The text has been studied by H. Kronasser, *Die Sprache* 7 (1961) 157-162, and again transliterated by Laroche, *RHA* 23 (1965), 169-172.

¹³ About this point, see the classic work of W. Burkert, *Homo necans: Interpretationen altgriechischer Opferriten und Mythen* (Berlin/New York 1972).

¹⁴ For a study of Hermes founding the sacrifice using as victims the oxen stolen from Apollo, see W. Burkert, "Sacrificio-sacrilegio: il 'Trickster' fondatore", in: C. Grottaneli - N. F. Parise (ed.), *Sacrificio e società nel mondo antico* (Bari 1988) 163-175, and particularly pp. 169-170 on the theme of getting the heavenly animals.

¹⁵ The text has been edited by I. Singer, *The Hittite KILAM Festival* I, II (StBot 27, 28; Wiesbaden 1983-1984).

and the king is asked for the recompense for the hunters. Finally, some skins of leopards, lions, boars and deer are brought before the priests (3.b.D. reverse).

The meaning of the ceremony, which is entirely dedicated to Inar, the tutelary-deity of wild animals and whose sacred animal is the deer, is clear. The hunters follow the animals and, finally, with the presentation of the hides, the killed animals are returned to Inar, that is, to their natural habitat, so they may become whole again¹⁶.

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¹⁶ For this interpretation of the procession in the KILAM festival, see A. Archi, in: F. Imparati (ed.), *Studi di storia e di filologia anatolica dedicati a G. Pugliese Carratelli* (Firenze 1988) 29-31.