



A Hittite Ritual for the Newborn

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A Hittite ritual for the newborn

IN KBO XVII OTTEN PUBLISHED AS NUMBER 61 a small fragment, the upper right hand corner, of what was probably a one column tablet. It contains a ritual performed by the midwife and the "old woman" for the newborn child, and is of interest both for its language and its content.

Obv. [...]x-an-na-aš-ša-aš

2. [...]x šā.BA 1 GIŠ

[...]x[...] še-e-ir ki-x[.]

4. [...]u]š-ta-an ka-a-ya 1 IM-ZU ki-it-ta

[...] ta-ra-ša-aš hu-iš-wa-an-za

6. [...]x GIR TUR ZABAR 4 KAK ZABAR

[...]ku-]wa-pi an-da-an ša-al-la-nu-uš-ki-mi

8. [...]x LÚAZU 1 LÚMUŠEN.DÙ pi-an-zi

[...] hu-u-uš-ta-an še-e-ir ar-ḥa wa-aḥ-nu-uš-ki-iz-zi

10. [...] nu-mu-kán^{SAL}ḥa-aš-nu-up-pa-al-la-aš

[...]x-wa-az^{SAL}ḥa-aš-nu-up-pa-al-la-aš ḥa-a-aš-ḥu-un

12. [...]x-at nu-mu ma-a-an TUR-an pa-ra-a pi-an-zi

[nu ki-i i-ya-mi ma-a-n]a-an-kán KA X U-šU ša-aḥ-mi na-aš ma-a-an

14. [ḥu-iš-wa-an-na-aš na-an da-a-l]a-aḥ-ḥi ma-a-na-aš

1-UL-ma ḥu-iš-wa-an-na-aš

[...]še[¹]-ir-ma-mu DUMU.É.GAL ar-ta ma-a-na-an-kán KA X U-šU ša-aḥ-mi

16. [...]x a-pát-ta pi-da-aḥ-ḥi nu GIŠkur-ta-al-liḫIA ki-it-ta

[...]x e-ik-za iš-par-ra-an-za na-aš-ta TUR-an GIŠkur-ta-li-aš

18. [...]x pár-ku-nu-mi nu-uš-še-eš-ta ta-ra-ša-an še-e-ir ar-ḥa wa-aḥ-nu-mi

[...]SAG.DU UR.BAR.RA-ma ar-ḥa wa-ar-nu-mi

20. [...]x-u-wa-aš SAG.DU-ZU wa-ar-ap-mi nu-uš-ši^{SAL}LUGAL

[...] wa-aš-ši-iz-zi a-pi-el-ma-aš-ši-kán ar-ḥa da-a-aḥ-ḥi

22. [...]š]a-an TUR-an gi-nu-wa-aš-ša-aš te-iḥ-ḥi

[...]n]u-uš-ši ḥu-i-šu wa-aš-ši ka-ru-ú pi-iḥ-ḥi wa-aš-ši-ma tar-za-aš

24. [...]x-zi nu-uš-ši ú-wa-¹mi¹ UR?GUR-an wa-aš-ši nam-ma pi-iḥ-ḥi

[...]x da-a-aḥ-ḥi an-x[.]ḥa-az-zu-x-x-iš

26. [...]x[...]x DUG.KA.DÙ NAG

rev. [...] ši-il(-)x[...]

x + 2 [...]x-an pár-aḥ-du ša[...]

[...]ḥu-u-m]a-an-du-uš MUḫIA-uš¹ KI.3¹ [...] KI¹.4

4'. [...]x lu-lu-ma ta-lu-ga-uš MUḫIA[...].x-du

[...]x ták-na-ša-at-za¹ DUTU-uš¹ NA¹pa-aš-ši-lu-uš i-e-id-du

6'. [...] da-a-lu

[...]mi nu ki-iš-ša-an ḥu-ik-mi ne-pi-ša-az-kán kat-ta ši-i-e-eš-šar ši-ya-ti

8'. [...]a-ti nu I-NA TÜR pa-a-un na-aš-ta¹ Im-mar-ni-i MÁŠ.GAL ú-ik-ku-un

[...]x a-uš-ta ú-ga^{SAL}ḥa-a-ša-ú-wa-aš IŠ-TU 10 ŠU.SI pa-ra-a

10'. [...]a]n? an-da A-NA DUMU.LÚ.UL¹U¹ I-NA 9 UZU¹UR ap-pi-iš-ki-mi

[...]IG]IḫIA-kán A-NA IGIḫIA-šU ḥa-an-da-a-an i-ni-ra-aš-kán i-ni-ri KI.2

12'. [...]KI.3] GEŠTUḫIA-kán A-NA GEŠTUḫIA-šU KI.4 KAXUḫIA-kán A-NA KA X U-šU KI.4

[UZU.NÍG.GIG-kán A-NA U]ZU.NÍG.GIG KI.6 ZÉ-kán A-NA ZÉ KI.7 gi-en-zu-kán

14'. [gi-en-zu-i KI.X...]x-ti KI.8? za-aš-ga-ra-iš-kán za-aš-ga-ri-iš-ši KI.8

[...]x-da-an-ni KI.10 ar-ki-i-e-eš-kán

16'. [ar-ki-i-ya-aš KI.X gi-e-]nu-kán A-NA gi-nu-wa-aš KI.MIN GİR-kán A-NA GİR KI.MIN

[...]a-aš-ši-e? kán? zu-un-ti-iš-ta ḥu-ur-ta-li-iš-ša

18'. [...] pár-ga-u-wa-aš HUR.SAGḫIA-aš pi-ḥu-te-iz-zi [...u?]-el?-l]u?-wa-aš ú-el-ku-wa pi-ḥu-te-iz-zi

20'. [...]x¹id¹du¹ nu pa-id-du MÁŠ.GAL-aš ták-na-aš¹ DUTU-i

[...]x DUTU-i GIŠzu-up-pa-ri lu-uk-kán ḥar-du

22'. [...] MÁŠ.GAL-ma ar-ḥa ḥa-ap-pi-iš-na-mi

[...]n]u-mi 1 ALAM.GIŠ

24'. [...]e ar-ḥa wa-ar-nu-mi

[...]x

Obv. 4. [...] and here one sour one is put.

[...] a living taraša-animal

6. [...] small bronze knife, 4 bronze pegs.

[...] in(to) wherever I raise.

8. [...] the BĀRŪ-priest and the augur give.

[...] moves the ḥušta-stone around over (him).

10. [...] the midwife ... me.

[...] I, the midwife, gave birth

12. [...] When they hand the child over to me, [I do the following when] I stop up his mouth. When he

14. [is "of life" I lea]ve him. But when he is not "of life" [...] The palace attendant stands over me when I stop up his mouth.

16. [...] I carry there. kurtal-containers are put. [...when?] the leg is spread. The child on the kurtal-containers

18. [I? put?...] I clean (him?) I move a taraša-animal around over him.

[...] But I burn the head of a wolf.

20. [...] I wash the head of ... The queen for him

[...] dresses. I take her (child) away from her.

22. [...] I put the child on his (i.e. the father's) knees.

[...] I have already given him a live medicine. But the medicine tarzaš

24. [...] I come and give him an UR²-GUR medicine again.
 [...] I take *an-x[.]x-ḥazzu-x-x-iš*
26. [...] a vessel of KA.DÙ-beer to drink.
 (lacuna)
- Rev. x + 2'. [...] let him chase [...]
 [...] all years 'ditto #3' [...] 'ditto' #4
- 4'. [...] prosperity, long years [...]
 [...] Let the sun-goddess of the earth make them into pebbles.
- 6'. [...] let him leave.
 I [...] I conjure as follows. Beer was pressed down from the sky.
- 8'. [...] I went into a pen. And I asked for a male goat from the god Immarni.
 [...] he saw. I, the "old woman", with ten fingers ... out
- 10'. [...] I hold it? on the mortal at the nine parts.
 [...] The eyes are arranged on his eyes. The eyebrows on the eyebrows ditto.
- 12'. [...] ditto #3. The ears on his ears ditto #4, the teeth on his tooth ditto #4
 [...] The liver on the liver ditto #6. The gall-bladder on the gall-bladder ditto #7 the lap?
- 14'. [on the lap? ditto #? ...] ditto #8? the anus on the anus ditto #8
 [...] on the ...-*danni* ditto #10. The testicles
- 16'. [on the testicles ditto #? The knee on the knees ditto. The foot on the foot ditto.
 [...] *ra-a-aš-ši-e?-kán? zuntišta ḥurtališša*
- 18'. [...] He will carry away to the high mountains.
 [...] He will carry away to the grass of the meadow(?)
- 20'. [...] Let him ... Let the male goat go and ... for the sun goddess of the earth.
 [...] Let him hold a lighted torch for the sun goddess ...
- 22'. [...] I cut the male goat in pieces.
 [...] I ... and a wooden image
- 24'. [...] I burn up.

Obv. 1. Otten, *KBo* XVII, p. V footnote 6, restores [*ḥa-aš-ša-an-na-aš-ša-aš*], but the traces at the break in his hand-copy do not favor *ša*.

4. It is tempting to restore [*ḥu-u-uš-ta-an*] as in line 9, but the syntax requires a nominative and *ḥušta-* is common gender. Cf. Friedrich, *HW*, 77.

5. *taraša-*, here modified by *ḥuišwanza* "living," occurs also in line 18, where it is contrasted with *SAG.DU UR.BAR.RA* "the head of a wolf." It must be some sort of animal.

11. Hittite has two homonymous verbs *ḥaš-*, one meaning "to open," the other "to give birth." Goetze, *JAOS* 74 (1954), 189, pointed out the different constructions used with these two verbs. When *ḥaš-* "to give birth" has an object, it requires the reflexive particle *-za*. *ḥaš-* "to open" is never accompanied by *-za*. The

construction with *ḥaš-* "to give birth" used intransitively is not described. If in line eleven *-wa-az* is the concatenation of the quotative particle and the reflexive particle, *ḥašḥun* must mean "I gave birth." The form *ḥašḥun* is a hapax legomenon. It was cited by Otten from this passage in *ZA* 50 (1952), 233, and repeated by Friedrich in the first *Ergänzungsheft* to his *Hethitisches Wörterbuch*. Before the *-wa-* all that is visible in the hand-copy is a vertical. One might restore [*ú-ka*] "I" or [*TUR-a-n*] "a child" or perhaps even [*na-at-ta*], in which case the sense would be "Have I the midwife not given birth?" The midwife recounts how she has had experience in bearing children. Perhaps in line 10 the speaker is the midwife of line 11, describing how another midwife delivered her child.

14. *ḥuišwannaš* is restored because the *-ma* of *mānaš* *úL-ma ḥuišwannaš* implies a contrast with what preceded.

13-15. Hittite has two phonetically similar verbs *šaḥ-* and *šanḥ-*. Güterbock, *JAOS* 84 (1964), 272 fn. 20 showed that *šaḥ-* means "to block, to clog, to stuff." *šanḥ-* has several meanings; the one relevant to interpreting these lines is "to sweep." Usually the forms of these two verbs are distinguished by the presence or absence of an *-n-*. In the forms of *šanḥ-* with triconsonantal clusters and in the endless imperative, the clusters are usually broken up in the spelling by the insertion of a vowel, but occasionally by the omission of the *-n-*. These latter forms are identical in spelling with the corresponding forms of the verb *šaḥ-*. *šaḥmi*, by its shape, can either mean "I stop up" or "I sweep." Otten, *KBo* XVII, p. V translates it using the verb *reinigen* with a question mark. In this context, however, it can only mean "I stop up." The intent is clear in stopping up the child's mouth if he is not "of life." The verb *šanḥ-* describes an action that is usually done to floors. The verb "to clean" used of people is *parkunu-*, and in line 18 the midwife says *parkunumi* "I clean him."—Two other passages contain references to blocking up the mouth using the verb *šaḥ-*. *KBo* III 8 ii 29-30, part of a mythological interlude in a ritual, reads: *SALḥašawan peḥuteḥḫi ... EME-šv šaḥdu nu SALḥašawaš pail* [...] *EME-šv šaḥta*. "I bring the 'old woman' Let her stop up his tongue. And the 'old woman' went ... (and) she stopped up his tongue." This is from a ritual against evil tongues. It is not clear from the text if the tongue in this passage is that of the afflicted person, that of some sort of ritual substitute, or merely a mythological tongue. In *KUB* IX 28 i 14, in the description of an image, a passage occurs: *pūriyaš wēlkuwan šaḥan* "grass is stuffed into its lips." In these two passages and in lines 13 and 15 of the ritual for the newborn, the verb never occurs with an *-n-* in the root.

22. This procedure is part of the naming ritual.

23. *tarzaš* is a hapax legomenon. It is not clear what part of speech it is.

24. The reading of the ur -sign is uncertain. In Otten's hand-copy its Winkelhaken is placed lower than that of the correctly written ur in rev. 10. It resembles the sign urudu but it has an additional vertical. Neither interpretation of this sign yields a satisfactory meaning.

Rev. 3. At Boghaz-Köy the signs ki.2 (read ki.MIN) are used as a ditto mark. In this text the scribe replaces the normally unvarying 2 by the number of the item in the particular list. In lines 11–16 the body parts are counted in this way up to 10, and ki.MIN is used thereafter.

6. The expected third singular active imperative of the verb *dala-* is *dalāu*, which occurs in *KUB XXXVI* 55 ii 9.

9. *aušta* could also mean "you saw."

10. The questioned "it" translates the broken *an* at the beginning of the line.

11–16. The haphazard counting and the failure of the number of body parts to total nine (as in line 10) is familiar to Hittitologists. The list of body parts in this substitution ritual is interesting because it contains several previously unattested words.¹

12. At the beginning of this line one body part is lost. The available space is small so that it was probably represented by a logogram.

13. *genzu-* may mean "lap" or "womb," cf. Hoffner, *RHA* 80 (1967), 24. The animal is a male goat (MÁŠ.GAL , rev. 8) so "womb" is excluded. I do not know which part of a goat is the lap.

14. There is very little space for the body part whose only legible sign is ri. uzutu "rib" is attractive, but the traces at the break in Otten's hand copy do not favor uzu . The nominative *zašgaraiš* and the dative-locative

zašgarišši both occur only here. The inflection of the word is reminiscent of that of *aiš* "mouth," whose dative-locative singular is *išši*. I suggest that this word is a compound containing *aiš* as its second element. The first part, *zašgar-* appears to be a spelling variant of the word for "excrement," which already has two variants, *šakkar* and *zakkar*. This multiplicity of spellings must represent an initial cluster, and indicates that the distinction between initial *š-* and *z-* was neutralized before *-k-*. The compound literally means "excrement-mouth," hence "anus." The combining form of *šakkar* is that of its nominative rather than that of the oblique stem *šakn-*. (I owe the identification of *zašgar-* with *šakkar* and *zakkar* to Professor H. G. Güterbock.)

15. No previously attested body part has a dative-locative singular ending in *-danni*. *arkiyeš* occurs only in this passage. It is a plural body part whose appropriate place in the list is between the anus and the knees. One may rule out the buttocks, which are expressed by the singular *arraš*, and the thighs, which are *walleš*. Bearing in mind that the animal is male, I suggest that *arkiyeš* are the testicles. If this definition is correct, the word *arki-* (or *arkiya-?*) is the reflex of Indo-European *H₂orǵhi- "testicle" and is cognate with Greek *órkhis*, Albanian *herdhe*, and Avestan *ərəzi*, all "testicle" (the Avestan form is a dual).

17. This line resists interpretation. The reading of the first word is taken from Otten, *StBoT* 15, 4, but presents difficulties. In Otten's hand-copy the second verticals of both the *a* and the *e* are not broken and the first two verticals of the *kán* are of unequal length.

18–21. The subject of all of these verbs is probably the male goat.

21. $\text{GIŠzuppari lukkan ḫardu}$ is ambiguous and could also mean "let him keep a torch lighted."

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¹ Cf. now V. Haas, *Orientalia NS* 40 (1971), 417f. This article reached me after I had submitted the present communication. I find no cause, however, for changing my analysis.

Addenda to JAOS 90 (1970), p. 184ff.

To p. 186: A phrase identical with *hlk lḫny dy bšdqh* may be found in the Hittite: *A-NA PA-NI DINGIR.MEŠ parā ḫandandātār iḫa-* (Ḫattušiliš I 48, cf. A. Goetze, *MVAG* 29/3 (1924), 10 and his note pp. 52–55 there) which means: "to walk before the gods with righteousness/loyalty." *ḫandāi-* equals Akkadian *kunnū* and *ḫandandātār* is rendered by *nīg.si.sá-tar* (*nīg.si.sá* = *mīšarum*) which also supports our analogy. It seems to me that even the other instances of *parā ḫandandātār* where it is spoken of the gods showing *p.h.* in distress, war etc. might be put in proper light by Biblical *šdqh* which also connotes salvation. For the saving acts by

God by means of *šdqh* see e.g. Ps. 31:2; 71:2; 143:11 and for showing or revealing *šdqh* see Hos. 10:12, Isa. 56:1, Ps. 98:2. Even the phrase in the introduction to the Apology of Ḫattušiliš: *šá ištār parā ḫandandātār memahḫi* (line 5) may be better understood on the basis of Biblical parallels. Reciting or telling God's *šdqh* is very common in the Old Testament and is clearly attested in the ancient poem of Judg. 5 (v. 11).

As in the Assyrian documents so also in Hittite the idiom "to walk in righteousness/loyalty before RN" in the sense of serving loyalty is attested in the treaties (cf. most recently: Kempinski-Kořak, "The Išmeriga Ver-