

Hardly a Hittite ‘hoe’

Jaan Puhvel (Encino)

Lively ghostwords, including one masterfully busted by our honoree (AoF 23: 95-97 [1996]), have flitted about Hittite vocabulary since the earliest. Some were induced by premature or erroneous sign readings, as when B. Hrozný (Sprache der Hethiter 41 [1917]) came up with *pé-ri-ua-*, connecting Skt. *pūrvyá-* ‘first(-rate)’, while subsequent scholarship preferred *pít-tal-ua-* ‘light, plain, mere’ and adduced as etymon Lat. *petilus* ‘thin, slender’. Phantom-etymologies can be due to dubious semantics, as when *ma-ša-* ‘locust-swarm’ was etymologized via ‘locust’ rather than ‘swarm’ and tied in with mastication (Lat. *mandō* ‘chew’), while it never denotes a locust but rather a swarm of insects, notably locusts, and may be cognate with Gk. *μᾶζα* ‘blob, lump’, borrowed into Latin as *massa* ‘heap, mass’ (JCS 56: 128 [2004]).

Another precarious area of lexical postulation entails the fission and fusion of apparent homonyms. Few will dispute that there are two discrete verbs *huek-* ‘conjure’ and ‘slaughter’, or *henk-* ‘bestow’ and ‘bow’; in contrast the attempt by CHD to force *šanḫ-* ‘seek’ and ‘sweep’ into a single verb flies in the face of evidence and common sense alike. One should likewise be on guard against facile splitoff of homophonous doublets from known lexemes, such as a putative *eka-* ‘death’ beside *eka-* ‘ice’ (KZ 117:193 [2004]). Occam would frown, and justly so.

With this in mind let us take up the neuter noun *te-e-kán*, well known as ‘earth’ (IE **dʰegʰom*). Several sources (HW, HEG, HHW, EHS 1: 270) book beside it a wholly separate homonym ^{URUDU/GIS}*te-e-kán* ‘hoe, pick(axe)’. It started with E. Laroche (RHA 10: 20-21 [1949-50]), who not only claimed a sense ‘houe, pioche’ but readily connected IE **(s)teig-* ‘be sharp’ (Skt. *tejate*, OPers. *tigra-*, etc.).

Laroche’s confidence rested on two passages. In KUB 24.9 II 18’-20’ (THeth 2: 32-35 [1972]) *arahza paizzi manninkuṣaḫḫi* ^{GIS}*te-e-kán pè-da-a-i* (= “*pád-da-a-i*”) *nu=kan aniuraš* KIN^{HIA} *anda dāi purut šer išḫuṣai nu ištalakzi*, allegedly meaning ‘(sorceress) goes outside, close by she digs with a (wooden) hoe, deposits within ritual gear, throws on loam and levels it’. The other, more fragmentary passage (KUB 32.115 [= KBo 39.8] I 9) reads *-p]í-iš* URUDU *te-e-kán* URUDU MAR (thus Laroche), or more

in keeping with his own postulates ^{URUDU}*tēkan* ^{URUDU}MAR '(copper) hoe, (copper) spade'. From the parallelism of well-attested asyndetic ^{GIŠ}AL ^{GIŠ}MAR, e.g. KUB 9.3 I 7' ^{GIŠ}AL ^{HIA} ^{GIŠ}MAR ^{HIA} '(wooden) hoes (and) spades', besides such copper tools (KUB 7.41 I 5 ^{URUDU}AL ^{URUDU}MAR), Laroche deduced the equation Hitt. *te-e-kán* = AL (Akk. *allu* 'hoe'), juxtaposed to MAR (Akk. *marru* 'spade').

The sequel of KUB 7.41 I 5-6 (H. Otten, ZA 54: 116-117 [1961]) offered another attestation in the instrumental case, *te-kán* ^{URUDU}AL *pedai petessar* ^{URUDU}MAR-*it*['the earth with the hoe he digs, the hole with the spade ...'], where AL lacks the phonetic case ending complement present in MAR-*it*. This omission is common enough with sumerograms; if ^{URUDU}AL reflects ^{URUDU}*tek(a)nit* (vel sim.), *tekan tek(a)nit pedai* 'digs the earth with a hoe' possibly involved homophonous word-play, unless AL also served as cover for other Hittite synonyms.

But the oddities of this identification do not end there. In the first example quoted above (KUB 24.9 II 18'), ^{GIŠ}*tēkan pedāi* was supposed to mean 'digs with a hoe', rather than 'digs the earth', despite lacking any phonetic sign of an instrumental case. Hence L. Jakob-Rost (THeth 2: 33, 66-67) used common sense to translate in line with many other attestations of *tēkan peda-* 'dig the earth', thereby crucially weakening Laroche's equation, yet leaving some loose ends unresolved.

Chief among these were the determinatives ^{GIŠ} and ^{URUDU}. In case 'hoe' did not pan out, why would 'earth' be determined by 'wood' and 'copper'?

Dealing first with ^{GIŠ}, Jakob-Rost's disregard of it had a precedent in H.G. Güterbock (ZA 42: 227 [1934]), but it still needs to be explained. HED's stab at the passage (6:56) got it right with *manninkuṣaḥḥi* as 'she draws near' (rather than locative singular of an ad-hoc hapax noun *manninkuṣaḥḥa-* 'nearness, vicinity') but was not successful in rendering *manninkuṣaḥḥi* ^{GIŠ} (sic) as 'approaches a tree' (involving inverted syntax, lack of case complement with ^{GIŠ} [cf. URU-*ri maninkuṣaḥḥi* 'gets close to the town'], disregard of tablet spacing [^{GIŠ} close to *te-*], and absence of ^{GIŠ} on the duplicate 452/u, 3'). Yet any suggestion (HEG T 301) that this ^{GIŠ} could result from associative interference of the homonym 'hoe' is sheer *petitio principii*.

As seen above, Laroche himself was ambivalent about the determinative status of ^{URUDU} in his second *Paradebeispiel* (KUB 32.115 I 9). The plausible restoration *ne-p]i-iš* is now reinforced by the fragmentary KBo 45.231, 2'-5':

nu-uš-ši ^{GIŠ}BANŠUR[
nu ne-p]i-iš ^{URUDU}K[I-(?)

AL ^{URUDU}KI-*an*(?) [
 ŠA GUŠKIN [

The tablet mentions a (wood) table, a 'sky of copper', possibly followed by 'earth' or 'ground' (KI), then a 'hoe of copper' or possibly a '(copper) ground' (^{URUDU}KI-*an*), and finally something 'of gold'.

The two texts in combination point to *nepiš* ^{URUDU}'sky of copper' and *tēkan* (= KI) ^{URUDU}'ground of copper', the latter associated with tools for digging (AL and MAR). We can readily rule out a mythic context (such as KUB 33.34 Vs. 9' *šer* = *a=šši nepiš* AN.BAR-*aš* 'above him [is] a sky of iron', treated by our honoree in Kaniššuwat 132 [1986]) and concentrate on mundane structures and circumstances. An intermediate conceit may be the artifact AN.BAR-*aš* and ^{URUDU}*aš nepiš* 'sky of iron, sky of copper', located in a decoction bowl in the Old Hittite ritual KBo 17.1 I 7'-8' (StBoT 8: 18-19). A man-made, partly dismantled cultic overhang figures in KUB 5.7 Rs. 22-23: ANA DINGIR ^{LIM}*kuit ŠAMU šer nu=ya ḥališšaz arḥa išḫūyan ḥarzi* 'what sky the deity had above he has stripped of its casing', indicating some kind of metal ceiling. By analogy planks of wood or sheets of copper may have served as flooring or ground cover (^{GIŠ}*tēkan*, *tēkan* ^{URUDU}) at and around a cultic venue. When a ritual performer went at it with pick and shovel, (s)he did not so much do heavy digging as pry open a subterranean safe-deposit cavity; *āpi* (*ḥatteššar*, *peteššar*, *AŠRU*) *peda-* 'dig a pit' equals *āpi ḥašš-* 'open a pit' or *āpi kinu-* 'break into a pit'.

It seems that not much remains to uphold the lexeme ^{URUDU/GIŠ}*tēkan-* '(Spitz)-hacke' with its etymology IE *(s)*teig-* 'stick', which stretches over three pages in HEG (T 300-302). In the wake of Laroche, its *cursus auctorum* included V. Pisani (Paideia 9: 128 [1954]), B. Čop (Linguistica 5: 25 [1963]), D. Weeks (Hittite Vocabulary 119, 217 [1985]), and J.L. Miller (StBoT 46: 62, 191 [2004]).

Yet not all may be lost for the root *(s)*teig-* in Hittite. In her letter to Šuppiliumaš I, asking for one of his sons in marriage, King Tut's widow ruled out ever picking one of her subjects as a spouse, adding *te-ik-ri-ya na-aḥ-mi* 'I fear *tekri*' (KBo 5.6 III 15; JCS 10: 94 [1956]). Not much could at first be done with this hapax; A. Götze (ArOr 5: 9 [1933]) suggested 'fürchte ich sehr (?)'. HW 220 conjectured alternatively a noun meaning 'stain' ('Befleckung', also in EHS 1: 225; 'contamination' in JCS 10: 94 [Güterbock]); syntactically a possible dative case governed by *naḥ-*, thus 'I fear for *t*.' No further instances have surfaced except the unenlightening vocabulary entry [*t*]e-*ik-ri-iš* (KBo 26.10 IV 10') with duplicate *te-ik-r[i-iš* (KBo 26.11 Rs. 8'), and an equally unilluminating accusative singular *te-ik-ri-in* (KBo 31.221, 6'; cf. KBo 16: V).

HEG T 302 hinted at an accusative singular *te-ik-ri-in* in unpublished texts and rendered the queen's outburst as 'vor *tekri* ekle ich mich' (i.e. '[such a] *t*. makes me sick'). At least these attestations reinforce Kronasser's grouping of *tekri-* (EHS 1: 225) with other abstract nouns formed by *-ri-*, more specifically common-gender ones such as *auri-* 'watch' and *kišri-* 'skein', besides neuters like *edri-* 'food' or *ešri-* 'shape'.

The etymology advocated in HEG T 302 involved **tek-* 'point, show', allegedly in Gk. τέκμαρ 'sign, token, goal' and Hitt. *tekkuššai-* 'show, present'. But the latter belongs rather with Avest. *daxš-* 'teach', and the semantic path from 'sign, token' in *pes-simam partem* is an arduous one.

Why not rather **(s)teig^h-ri-*, cognate with Skt. *téjas-* 'sharpness, sheen', *tigmá-* 'sharp', OPers. *tigra-* 'sharp', Gk. σίζω 'prick', στίγμα 'perforation, tattoo', σιγμή 'mark, spot', Goth. *stiks* 'prick, point' (Luke 4.5 in *stika melis* = ἐν σιγμῇ χρόνου 'in a moment of time')? Gk. στίγμα denoted the marking or branding of slaves and cattle and readily acquired a connotation of downgrading and disgrace, quite unlike Skt. *téjas-* where acuity evolved in the direction of effulgence. Hittite sides with Greek, with *tegri-* implying degradation. The pair στίγμα/*tegri-* recalls the Indo-Iranian suffix variation in *tigmá-/tigra-*. The *cri de cœur* of the queen, *tegri nahmi*, thus meant 'I am fearful of the stigma' of being déclassée by diluting the blood royal with an inferior spouse (significantly the sumerogram ÌR or ARAD used by the queen denoted both subject, servant, and slave!).

Notes d'étymologie anatolienne*

† Georgi T. Rikov - Biliana Mihailova (Sofia)

1. Hitt. *allanija-*, v.irl. *allas*, gr. ἄλεα, ἄλέη

Berman et Hamp (1982: 124-126) relient v.irl. *allas* 'sueur' au verbe hittite *allanija-* en lui attribuant le sens 'get (over)heated, hot' au lieu de 'unruhig werden'¹. Ils acceptent le rattachement de ces deux mots au verbe grec ἀλεαίνω 'être chaud, chauffer' dérivé du nom ἄλεα, ion. ἄλέη 'chaleur, chaleur du soleil' (depuis Hom.). Cette relation² est proposée déjà par Szemerényi (1971: 653) qui rejette avec raison, à cause du manque de *ʃ* initial, le lien avec gr. εἴλη, ἔλη 'lueur du soleil, chaleur', v.h.a., v.angl. *swelan* 'brûler', lit. *svilti* 'flamber' d'ie. **suelh_x-*, accepté dans les dictionnaires de Frisk, Chantraine et Beekes.

Berman et Hamp reconstruisent pour gr. ἄλεα, ἄλέη la protoforme **alésā* «a feminization of an old collective» et pour v.irl. *allas* **ales-to*. D'après Berman et Hamp les mots grec et irlandais seraient issus d'ie. **H_ael(H)es-* plutôt que de **Hes-*. Ils font dériver le verbe hittite apparenté *allanija-* de **H_a(e)l(H)es-* en supposant que l'absence de *h* initial en hittite est «an additional example of a candidate for the fourth laryngeal, which fails to appear in Hittite ...».

Cependant, les protoformes **lh₁-es-ā* pour gr. ἄλεα, ἄλέη et **lh₁-es-to* pour v.irl. *allas* paraissent plus vraisemblables, puisqu'on pourrait ainsi éviter la reconstruction de la quatrième laryngale. Le verbe hittite, qui représente selon l'opinion

* Les commentaires sur hitt. *allanija-*, v.irl. *allas*, gr. ἄλεα, ἄλέη et sur hitt. *dāyani*, louv. *dāyana/i-* sont basés sur quelques notes que j'ai trouvées dans les papiers de mon professeur Georgi T. Rikov. Connaissant bien l'attention au moindre détail que G.T. Rikov mettait dans son travail, je me rends bien compte que ces deux petites notes étymologiques auraient été très imparfaites pour son exigence scientifique. Quand même, je cours le risque de les présenter ici sous cette forme trop inachevée et rude car je considère que ses idées esquissées sont valables. J'assume la responsabilité pour toute inexactitude dans l'exposé.

1 Ce sont Pedersen et Benveniste qui arrivent les premiers à cette équation (v. Szemerényi 1971: 653).

2 Hitt. *allanija-*, v.irl. *allas*, gr. ἄλεα, ἄλέη doivent être séparés de lat. *adoleō* et ces congénérés que Szemerényi (ibid.) ajoute à cette comparaison.