

# EXPELLING THE DEMON OF EFFEMINACY: ANNIWIYANI'S RITUAL AND THE QUESTION OF HOMOSEXUALITY IN HITTITE THOUGHT\*

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## *Abstract*

The ritual of Anniwiyani drew the attention of scholars for more than eighty years, since its earliest publications. As its aim is not self-evident, various speculations and attempts were made during the years in order to try and comprehend it. The conventional explanations focused on the masculine-feminine dichotomy characterizing the ritual, as the background for its performance. The current paper sets forth a new interpretation, according to which the ritual actually aimed at treating a passive homosexual, in order to turn him into the active party in sexual relations.

In light of this new perspective, the paper also seeks to assess the broader question of homosexuality in Hittite thought, as evident from several other textual sources.

*Keywords:* Anniwiyani's Ritual (CTH 393), masculinity, femininity, passive homosexuality, <sup>d</sup>LAMMA *lulimi*- ("LAMMA the effeminate"), <sup>d</sup>LAMMA *innarawant*- ("LAMMA the manly")

## *Outline of the Ritual*

The text commonly known as "Anniwiyani's ritual" (CTH 393)<sup>1</sup> was first published in a preliminary fashion by Edgar H. Sturtevant in 1927, but only eight years later did a full version of it appear that included transliteration, English translation, and philological commentary.<sup>2</sup> The tablet itself is a *Sammeltafel* prescribing two different

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\* Abbreviations used in this paper are in accordance with those appearing in *The Hittite Dictionary of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago*, Volume P, vii-xxix.

<sup>1</sup> Main cuneiform copy: VBoT 24, published by A. Goetze.

<sup>2</sup> Sturtevant and Bechtel 1935: 100-126. For an up-to-date edition and analysis of this text, see Bawanypeck 2005: 51-70.

magical rituals attributed to the same authoress, Anniwiyani, and performed in honor of certain tutelary deities (<sup>d</sup>LAMMA). The current discussion centers on the first of these rituals (VBoT 24 i-iii 3).

The main purpose of the ritual is found in the fifth paragraph of the text (VBoT 24 i 25-29), where a young virgin (DUMU.MUNUS *šuppeššara*-<sup>3</sup>) is brought to the house where the ceremony takes place and stands at its entrance. The following then occurs (i 28-29):

*nu* DUMU.MUNUS *hal-za-a-i pa-ra-a-wa-kán e-hu* <sup>d</sup>LAMMA *lu-li-mi-<sup>f</sup>es<sup>7</sup>*  
<sup>f</sup>*a'n-da-wa-kán* <sup>d</sup>LAMMA *in-na-ra-u-wa-an-za ú-iz-zi*

The girl cries out: “Come out, <sup>d</sup>LAMMA “the effeminate”!  
<sup>d</sup>LAMMA “the manly” will come in!”

The meaning of the appellations of these two deities and the significance of this paragraph as a whole are discussed below. First, however, the ritual’s principal phases will be illustrated for the sake of clarity:

The opening lines state the purpose of the ritual performance (i 1-3):

*UM-MA* <sup>f</sup>*A-an-ni-ú-i-ia-ni* *AMA* <sup>m</sup>*Ar-ma-ti* <sup>LU</sup>MUŠEN.DÙ  
*ARAD* <sup>m</sup>*hu-u-ur-lu-u ma-a-an* <sup>d</sup>LAMMA *lu-li-mi-ia-aš*  
*SÍSKUR* *i-ia-mi nu ki-i da-ah-hi*

Thus Anniwiyani, mother of Armati the Augur, servant of Hürli:  
 When I perform the ceremony of <sup>d</sup>LAMMA “the effeminate”, I take the following:...

The text continues by specifying the magical procedures that are conducted throughout the ritual performance:

When evening falls (*mahhan nekuzi*), blue and red strings of wool are wrapped around the patient’s feet, hands and neck, and also around his bed (firstly around its “four legs”: 4 <sup>GIS</sup>*patialēš hantezi palšī*), chariot, bow, and quiver. It is likely that the patient now goes to sleep. As dawn breaks (*mān lukatta*), all the strings are collected and taken away. The young virgin is then brought to the house entrance, where she calls for the leaving of <sup>d</sup>LAMMA “the effeminate” and the arrival of <sup>d</sup>LAMMA “the manly”.

<sup>3</sup> Literally: “a pure girl” (see Moyer 1969: 58-59; Taggar-Cohen 2006: 318 n. 836, with references). For the etymology of this term see Oettinger 1986: 123-124. For the occurrence of this phrase in the current text see Sturtevant and Bechtel 1935: 119-120; Bawanyeck 2005: 66.

During the next scene the ceremony participants<sup>4</sup> go to a remote and isolated place (“where a plough does not reach”, [nu k]uwapi<sup>GIS</sup>APIN-aš UL āraškizi), where a makeshift gate is constructed. Identical offerings are made at both sides of the gate, and a sacrifice is offered to <sup>d</sup>LAMMA “the effeminate”. After performing some more ritual practices, they all pass through the gate. The last person to pass through it demolishes the gate and shouts, while the rest of them run off.

Once they have left the place, they block the road behind them<sup>5</sup> and head back to town. After receiving a favorable bird-omen they enter the town, and everybody washes up. They leave the town again, and then some more rites take place, including the offering of sacrifices, this time in honor of <sup>d</sup>LAMMA “the manly”.

The considerations presented below are meant to suggest that this ritual was conducted in response to the occurrence of homosexual relations, in which the patient was the passive partner in the homoerotic act. Throughout the ritual performance, it is suggested, the denunciation of passive homosexuality is reflected by the attempt to expel the “effeminate” deity, while the invitation of the “manly” deity “to come in” symbolizes the aspiration to restore the patient’s “manliness”, that is, his sexual behavior as the active party.

### *Previous Suggestions for the Ritual Aims*

Sturtevant’s original suggestion was to regard the “effeminate” deity as responsible for the delivering of female offspring, and conversely, the “manly” deity as responsible for the delivering of males. He thus suggested that the purpose of the whole ritual was to ensure the birth of male descendants. Later, though, Sturtevant backed down from this interpretation (Sturtevant and Bechtel 1935: 118). It was also rejected by Beckman (1983: 19 n. 87), who rejected even the interpretation of the two deities’ appellations

<sup>4</sup> The exact identity of the ceremony participants is rather obscure. Bawanypeck (2005: 196 n. 643, 200) considers the participants to be several augurs along with some other people. My own assumption, however, is that the patient’s community (or at least representative members of it) was involved in the procedures of purification; see further below.

<sup>5</sup> Considering the fact that this “blockage” is done using wooden pegs, it was most probably a symbolic one.

as “effeminate” and “manly”, yet without suggesting an alternative. Pringle (1993: 132) claimed that among the Hittites there was no preference whatsoever for begetting male progeny. In any case, it seems that Sturtevant’s original suggestion has failed to gain acceptance.

Hoffner (1987: 282) suggested that the aim of Anniwiyani’s ritual was to restore the patient’s manliness. This suggestion is undoubtedly correct, but at the same time it offers only a partial explanation. Hutter (2003: 229) has made a similar suggestion, viewing the two deities as being “addressed...in order to help restore sexuality and strength”, and assuming that the ritual generally aims “to provide fertility” (p. 255). The present considerations, if accepted, present a clearer picture regarding what exactly this “manliness”, “sexuality” and “strength” might involve.

### *Private Sins, Public Denunciation*

As several scholars have already demonstrated, there are numerous similarities between this ritual and Paškuwatti’s (CTH 406),<sup>6</sup> even though the ailment from which the patient in Anniwiyani’s ritual suffers is not explicitly mentioned. The parallels that do seem to exist between the two rituals are the use of colored wool strings; the participation of a virgin girl; and the construction of a make-shift gate in order to perform a symbolic act of transition. No less significant are the mutual dating (LH copy of a MH original) and cultural origins (Luwian) of these two texts.

In spite of the similarities between the rituals, some differences can be observed as well, the most notable being the sole patient in Paškuwatti’s ritual in contrast with the involvement, it may be suggested, of the whole community in Anniwiyani’s. The participation of the patient’s community members in the latter is quite

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<sup>6</sup> See among others Hoffner 1987: 281-282, 287; Bawanypeck 2005: 193-194. The customary view held by scholars is that Paškuwatti’s ritual was meant at treating an impotent man and restoring his potency (Hoffner 1987: 287). However, Miller (see elsewhere in this volume) now suggests that Paškuwatti’s ritual was aimed at treating a passive homosexual, naturally having his own considerations, that differ from the ones expressed throughout the current paper concerning Anniwiyani’s ritual. It cannot be ruled out that the Hittites had at their disposal two different magical rituals intended to achieve the same objective, each employing a different set of techniques. As is well known, multiple rites are documented for a large variety of purposes, such as successful birth, protection against a plague, and royal substitute rituals.

feasible, as the matter of sexual offence and its cleansing was a social one, relevant to the community as a whole. Sexual misconduct is a kind of human behavior that is most likely to be perceived as detrimental to the surrounding society, hence requiring that society's active involvement in the purifying measures taken. Hoffner demonstrated long ago that a person committing *hurkel*<sup>7</sup> had defiled his entire community. As a result, the performance of purification rites became necessary, and even in the case where the offending individual was banished (as described in the instructions for the province governors, CTH 261),<sup>8</sup> his townsfolk were required to wash themselves thereafter (Hoffner 1973: 85, 90). Indeed, supporting evidence for these assumptions could be seen in two purification rites designed to deal with the sexual offences of incest (CTH 445.C) and bestiality (CTH 456.5). In all likelihood, in both these examples the offender's community was to be purified following the offence (Hoffner 1973: 87, 89).<sup>9</sup> It also seems improbable that a person would voluntarily undergo this kind of ceremony, had it not been the result of pressure imposed upon him by his surrounding community. Not only would the patient face the public humiliation involved, but would also bear the expenses of sacrificial animals and ritual paraphernalia, not to mention the fee surely charged by the practitioner. Then as now, nothing was free of charge...

### *Masculinity, Femininity, and a New Interpretation*

One key to understanding the aim of the ritual might be found in etymology, by trying to decipher the two key-deities' appellations: <sup>d</sup>LAMMA *lulimi*- and <sup>d</sup>LAMMA *innarawant*-. As we have seen, Sturtevant translated them as "effeminate"<sup>10</sup> and "manly"<sup>11</sup> respectively (Sturtevant and Bechtel 1935: 118). But the fact that

<sup>7</sup> A term denoting abominable acts of negative sexual nature, cf. *HED* 3: 401-402, Haase 1995: 34-38, Hoffner 1997: 224.

<sup>8</sup> *nam-ma-za URU-aš EGIR-an-da wa-ar-ap-du* (KUB 13.2 iii 14), "Furthermore, may the townsfolk wash themselves thereafter!", see Hoffner 1973: 85 n. 23.

<sup>9</sup> In Hoffner's 1973 article CTH 445.C is identified as fragment 827/z, whereas CTH 456.5 is identified as fragment KUB 41.11.

<sup>10</sup> According to *HED*: "effeminate" (*HED* 2: 368) or "passive" (*HED* 5: 114-115); According to *CHD*: "undesirable quality—e.g., impotence, effeminacy, weakness..." (*CHD* L-N: 82).

<sup>11</sup> According to *HED*: "potent" (*HED* 2: 368; 5: 114).

these deities are almost completely absent from any other Hittite text makes translating their appellations almost impossible, and Sturtevant's tentative translation remains accepted among most scholars to this day.<sup>12</sup>

The appellation of <sup>d</sup>LAMMA *innarawant-* is relatively easy to comprehend, since its etymological origin seems clear enough, as a cognate of the Luwian stem *annaru-* (adjective) / *annari-* (noun): “strong, vigorous” (*HED* 2: 371-372; Bawanypeck 2005: 185).

In the ritual of Zarpiya (CTH 757)<sup>13</sup> appear certain *innarawant*-deities. It can be deduced from the references to them that they were attributed vigorous, masculine, and militant qualities (KUB 9.31 i 37-41):

...e-eš-ha-[nu-wa-an]-ta ku-e-eš ú-e-eš-ša-an-ta  
<sup>[LÚ].MEŠ</sup> hu-u-la-hi-ia-[aš-ša-an] hu-up-ru-uš ku-i-e-eš iš-hi-ia-an-ti-iš  
<sup>IŠ-TU</sup> GİR-ia-aš-ša-an [ku-i]<sup>r</sup> e-eš iš-hu-uz-zi-ia-<an>-te-eš  
<sup>GIŠ</sup> PAN<sup>HIA</sup>-aš-ša-an ku-i<sup>7</sup>-[e-eš] hu-u-it-ti-ia-an-ta  
<sup>GIŠ</sup> GAG.Ú.TAG<sup>HIA</sup>-ia [har-ká]n-zi

...those who are wearing bloo[di]d(-cloths?);  
 those who are clothed with (uncivilized-)mountain-dwellers' clothing;  
 [those wh]o are girded with daggers;  
 tho[se who ho]ld drawn bows, and arrows.

Understanding the appellative of <sup>d</sup>LAMMA *lulimi-*, on the other hand, proves more complicated, as no clear etymology of the word can be offered. Hence, Sturtevant's original translation was contextual rather than etymological, and his interpretation of this term was based on the opposition with *innarawant-*. So as the latter meant “manly”, the former was understood as “effeminate”.

Two attempts were nonetheless made in order to solve the problem, and translate the elusive term regardless to its appearance in Anniwiyani's ritual. Haas translated it as “Hirschgott”, “Stag-deity”, based on Akkadian *lulimum* and *lulimmu* (Haas 1994: 450 Anm. 10), whereas Starke hypothesized it is the participle of the Luwian verb *\*lulii-*, “to prosper” (Starke 1979: 255f.; 1990: 456 Anm. 1654). A similar interpretation and etymology (though different semantic considerations) are offered by Puhvel (*HED* 5: 115, 127-128). Even though the last-mentioned approach is controversial,<sup>14</sup> it accords

<sup>12</sup> See McMahon 1991: 49-50.

<sup>13</sup> For the *editio princeps* see Schwartz 1938. For an up-to-date translation see Collins 1997: 162-163.

<sup>14</sup> See a different opinion in Melchert 1993: 129.

well with the Luwian etymology of *innarawant-*, as well as with other Luwian characteristics of the text, such as the private names appearing in it. It would not be hard to imagine that in the Hittite mind “prosperity” might be connected with “fertility”, and further with “femininity”. Even if in Anniwiyani’s ritual that femininity is perceived negatively, it is reasonable to assume that femininity is not regarded as negative in its essence, but only when inappropriately applied to men. Hence, a passive homosexual could very well have been regarded by the Hittites as “effeminate”, especially with regard to the role he assumes in the sexual act.

Admittedly, etymological considerations can be somewhat “hazardous” and inconclusive. The case of the obscure *lulimi-* is surely a good example of that. But even if leaving etymology aside, this term’s meaning seems well-established by the contrast with *innarawant-*.

As mentioned above, after the symbolic passage through the gate, and once offerings had been made in honor of the “effeminate” deity, a collective ceremonial bathing takes place—just before a new round of sacrifice starts, this time in honor of the “manly” deity. Crossing through the gate and bathing distinguish between two parts of the ritual, and represent the shift from the impure state the community was in, to a new, proper and desired state.

The crucial questions are these: Why is the deity related to the problematic state, from which the people wish to be relieved, “effeminate”? And on the other hand, why is the deity related to the desired state, at which the performance of the whole ritual is aimed, “manly”? The answers to these questions hold the key for decoding the whole text and understanding its meaning.

Although a sole patient is mentioned at the beginning of the text, it is suggested here that the ritual is a communal purification rite of a sort: purification from “femininity” or “passivity”, and an attempt at gaining “masculinity” or “virility”.

According to the present hypothesis, the ritual comprises two structural parts: the acts involving the patient, and those involving his community. Moreover, a clear distinction is made between the rites performed for the “effeminate” deity and those performed for the “manly” one, a distinction marked by the symbolic passing through the gate and the bathing.

Hence, the ritual structure should be divided into two parts, on the basis of the object of the ceremonial activities: the first, in

which the procedures are aimed at the patient, describes the treatment of the problem the ritual aims to solve, while the second, in which the procedures involve the patient's community members, describes the purification of those who came in contact with that individual, who was the cause of the problem. Passing through the gate symbolizes not only a shift of focus from one deity to another, but also a shift of focus from the individual to his community.

The clear sexual nature of the problem suffered by the patient is evident from the appearance of the virgin and her role in the ritual, and by the nature of items to which the colored wool strings are tied during the patient's "healing process", i.e. his chariot, bow, and quiver, all symbols of masculinity in Hittite thought.<sup>15</sup>

As a rule, the objective of each Hittite ritual is stated in its introduction and/or within its colophon; in Anniwiyani's ritual, on the other hand, there is no explicit mention of homosexuality. The only explanation for the ritual's purpose is provided at the beginning of the text (VBoT 24 i 2-3):

*mān* <sup>d</sup>LAMMA *lulimiyaš* SÍSKUR *iyami*

When I perform the ceremony of <sup>d</sup>LAMMA "the effeminate" ...

The appearance of the "effeminate" deity in the paragraph opening the ritual and explaining its purpose can now be understood as subtle wording indicating that the ritual is aimed at dealing with the "problem" of passive homosexuality, represented by this deity. The ritual, then, was meant to restore the "manliness" of a passive homosexual, and thereafter to purify the members of his community from the defilement caused by his forbidden behavior as the receptive part of the sexual act.

### *Sexual Vice and Passive Homosexuality in Hittite Thought*

Current knowledge of what was considered by the Hittites as sexual vice derives from several genres of written sources: mythological, juridical (the Hittite laws), prescriptive (such as the instructions for the temple officials), and ritual (purification rites) texts. While two sexual vices, bestiality and incest, are clearly condemned in

<sup>15</sup> As demonstrated by Hoffner (1966), even though he did not mention Anniwiyani's ritual in his review of symbols of masculinity and femininity in Hittite magical rituals.



these sources, reference to homosexuality seems to be completely absent. An explanation for this fact might be found in the possibility that though not tolerable as a normative behavior pattern, passive homosexuality was, nevertheless, not considered by the Hittites as severe as other sexual offences. Therefore, no official law or instruction prohibiting this conduct was ever decreed, leaving only the less formal means of ritual to deal with it.

There is evidence for this kind of phenomenon concerning a different type of sexual misconduct: brother-sister relations. Even though the Hittite Law Code nowhere proscribes such conduct, Šuppiluliuma, in his treaty with Huqqana king of Hayaša (CTH 42), explicitly states that in Hatti a person having sexual relations with his sister is put to death. Such relations are also condemned as a severe sin in the Zalpa tale (CTH 3), where it is termed “*natta āra*”, “not right”, “inappropriate”.<sup>16</sup> Most importantly, brother-sister relations are considered *hurkel* in the fragmentary magical ritual colophon CTH 445 (IBoT 2.117 iv 1’-3’ // KBo 12.115 rev. 1’-4’):

DUB.1.KAM<sup>1</sup> *QA-TI*

*ma-a-an UN-aš h[(ur-ki-il i-ia-zi)]*

*nu-za DUMU.MUNUS-ŠU NIN[-Š(U AMA-ŠU da-a-i)]*

*nu-za ki-i da[-ah-hi...]*

First tablet, complete.

If a person commits *hurkel*,

(as) he takes (=sexually) his daughter, [h]is sister (or) his mother:

[I] ta[ke] the following:...

Here brother-sister sexual relations are defined as “*hurkel*”, a term commonly translated as “abomination” and usually ascribed by the Hittites to the worst conduct, violating of the most fundamental taboos existing in their society. The Hittite code of laws included numerous prohibitions on incest and kin-relations; yet brother-sister relations, here severely defined as “*hurkel*”, was not one of them.

The negative attitude the Hittites might indeed have held with regard to passive homosexuality can be seen in the “Siege of Uršu” text (CTH 7),<sup>17</sup> where the Hittite king, furious at his commanders’

<sup>16</sup> For a study of this term and its implications see Cohen 2002.

<sup>17</sup> For an edition and a discussion of this text see Beckman 1995; Miller 1999: 44-45.

lack of ability to conquer an enemy city, upbraids them as follows (KBo 1.11 rev. 13):

...*i-na-an-na ku-la-ú-tam te-pu-uš*

...now you have performed (behavior of) *kulu'u*!

The king then repeats this accusation (KBo 1.11 rev. 17-18):

...*ku-li-e-eš-šar MU.IM.MA* <sup>m</sup>*Tu-ut-ha-li-ia*

*i-pu-uš i-na-an-na at-ta te-pu-uš ku-la-ú-tam*

Last year<sup>18</sup> Tudhaliya performed *kuleššar*; now you have performed (behavior of) *kulu'u*!

From this quotation it is understood that the Hittite term *kuleššar* is analogous to the Akkadian phrase *kula'ūtam epēšum*, “behave as *kulu'u*”.<sup>19</sup> The *kulu'u* was a Mesopotamian cultic official that may have been a eunuch or a homosexual. The term's exact nature is still open for debate, but it is certain that he was a male fulfilling an effeminate role in the cult of Ištar (*CAD* A (II): 341; Bottéro 1992: 191; Guinan 1997: 469). Bottéro (1992: 191) even went as far as to claim that the *kulu'u* (alongside a few other cultic functionaries) was regarded as the passive partner in homosexual love.

As both Puhvel (*HED* 4: 303) and Hoffner (2000: 75) have demonstrated, Hittite *kuleššar*, deriving from “*ku(wa)liya-*”, should be interpreted as “be calm(ed), be passive”.<sup>20</sup> This may therefore provide implicit evidence suggesting that the allegation of male passivity, equated with passive homosexuality, may constitute an insult, since it is perceived as a demonstration of behavior contrary to what is expected from the manly warrior. As Hoffner (2000: 75) wrote concerning “the male homosexual in the Uršum story”, “If idleness or passivity is the reason for describing a male homosexual's activity as *kuleššar*, I would think he was the passive partner”.

Another suggestion relating to the attitude toward passive homosexuality in Hatti was made by Puhvel, as part of his interpretation of another ritual text, the ritual of Zuwi (CTH 412).<sup>21</sup> In Puhvel's view (1986: 153-154; *HED* 3: 401), certain “*hurkel*-people”

<sup>18</sup> For this translation of the phrase MU.IM.MA see Beckman 1995: 30.

<sup>19</sup> On this issue see also Otten and von Soden 1968: 24.

<sup>20</sup> It should be noted, however, that Beckman and Miller have translated this term in a somewhat different manner: “hesitation” (Beckman 1995: 26), or “procrastination” (Miller 1999: 44, 45).

<sup>21</sup> For the *editio princeps* of this text see Giorgieri 1990.

appearing in the text were men blamed for passive homosexuality, a misconduct for which they were sentenced to death. In order to be spared the death penalty, they were required to prove their manliness by overcoming certain animals. Puhvel's speculation has been rejected by some scholars, mainly because of the lack of supporting evidence (Hutter 2000: 103 n. 30); but in light of the suggestions offered in this paper, it might be worth reconsidering these objections as well.

### *Conclusions*

The text discussed throughout the current paper, Anniwiyani's ritual, seems to be most suggestive with regard to the question of Hittite attitudes to (passive-)homosexuality. Several excerpts from other Hittite texts, shown above, might contribute further evidence illuminating this issue.

As much as it could be evaluated, the concept of passive homosexuality among the Hittites seems to have borne a different significance than that found within the cultural framework of present-day Western society. Today, when homosexuality is perceived negatively, it is due to it being viewed as an "abnormal" behavior performed by both individuals (that is, both penetrator and penetrated are condemned), while what was conceived as detrimental in the Hittite mind was not necessarily the homoerotic relations per se, but the effeminate behavior of a male person. In other words, the penetrator seems not to have been condemned at all, since he "did what he was supposed to do".

The attitude to homosexuality in the Hittite society has never been fully evaluated, primarily because of the alleged lack of information pertaining to it. It is hoped that the hypothesis presented here may contribute to the research of Hittite sexuality, and allow us a better understanding of this fascinating aspect of their society.

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