

TO DRINK A GOD

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The construction of the verb *aku/eku-* "to drink" with the accusative of a divine name has been a crux ever since the beginning of Hittitology. A sentence like

1. a) LUGAL-*uš*^DUTU-*un ekuzi*, or
b) LUGAL SAL.LUGAL^DUTU-*un akuwanzi*
literally means "the king drinks" or "king and queen drink the Sungoddess."

Many scholars found this literal translation unacceptable because it seemed to imply a kind of mystical thinking which they could not imagine to have existed among the Hittites. Some proposed to take the verb as causative, "cause to drink", "give to drink", German "tränken". Others immediately objected that nowhere else is *eku-* ever causative, so one should not assume this function for just this phrase. In his *Hethitisches Wörterbuch* (first fascicle, 1952) Friedrich rejected the interpretation as causative and even adduced the Eucharist for comparison with the literal translation ("an unser Abendmahl erinnend"). Even earlier, in 1938, Forrer delivered a paper entitled "Das Abendmahl im Hatti-Reiche" at the 20th International Congress of Orientalists in Brussels.¹

The publication of the royal funerary rituals (1939 in cuneiform, 1958 in Otten's edition)² added new material. Here the phrase

2. a) *akkantaš* ZI-ŠU *ekuzi*, or
b) *apēl* ZI-ŠU *ekuzi/akuwanzi*

"he drinks the soul of the deceased" or "he drinks/they drink his soul" occurs frequently. Even those scholars who were willing to accept the idea of "drinking a god" found it difficult to do the same with the soul of the

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¹ Actes du XXe Congrès International des Orientalistes, Bruxelles 1938 (Louvain, 1940) 124-128.

² KUB 30 by H. Ehelolf, published posthumously; H. Otten, Hethitische Totenrituale (Berlin, 1958).

dead king or queen. Otten, in his commentary³, adduced a passage which has *pianzi* "they give" instead of the expected *ekuzi* "he drinks" of the parallel:

3. a) EGIR-*anda*[-*ma hanne*]š *huhheš pianzi* (KUB 30.19+i 42, p. 34)

b) [EGIR]-*anda-ma huhhiš hanniš ekuzi* (KUB 30.24 ii 23, p. 60).

He explained the erroneous *pianzi* by assuming that the scribe thought of *akuwanna pianzi* "they give to drink", and concluded that this was proof that *eku-* with accusative meant "tränken", "to provide with drink".

The same rituals for the dead led Puhvel in 1957⁴, before the publication of Otten's edition, to the conclusion that the phrase in question meant "to drink in honor of the deity or the soul", or simply "to drink to the deity", or, with a transitive verb in English, "to toast the deity". This interpretation may be supported by the rare occurrences of *eku* with the name of the deity in the dative:

4. a) *hantezz[i pa]lš DUTU ŠAMÊ ekuzi*

EGIR-ŠU-*ma A* [NA D]M *ekuzi*

EGIR-ŠU-*ma A* [NA D]LAMM]A *ekuzi* (KBo 15.25 rev. 15-17)

b) EGIR-*ma ANA D*IM *ekuzi* (KUB 34.77 i 8)

c) *nu ANA D*UTU *ekuzi* . . . *ANA D*U *ekuzzi* (KBo 21.36 i 4, 7)

d) EGIR-ŠU-*ma akkandaš ZI-ni 3-ŠU ekuzi*

mahhan-ma . . .] *apêl ZI-an ekuzi* (KUB 39.15 i 7-8, p. 82)

Note that in examples a and d construction with dative and accusative interchange. In 1966 Carruba used these passages as confirmation of the interpretation "drink in honor of the deity."⁵ He also pointed out that the phrase *akuwanna pai* "give to drink" is not equivalent to *eku-* "drink", citing passages like

5. *nu ANA SAL alhuitra EN.SISKUR-ya NAG-na pianzi nu DUTU-un TUS-aš akuwanzi* "They give the a.- woman and the patron to drink, and they 'drink' the Sungod" (KUB 17.24 iii 22f.). In other words, the phrase

³ l. c. p. 132.

⁴ J. Puhvel, "On an alleged eucharistic expression in Hittite rituals" *Mitteilungen des Instituts für Orientforschung* 5 (1957) 31-33.

⁵ O. Carruba, *Das Beschwörungsritual für die Göttin Wišurijanža* (StBoT 2, 1966) p. 40f.

"drink a god" may mean "drink to the god" but not "give the god to drink."

Carruba also saw the significance of the phrase "to drink the cup of a god" for the interpretation of "to drink a god."

6. GAL D]IM *akuanzi* (KBo 17.74 i 20 and frequently in that text, StBoT 8). Kammenhuber later made this the basis of her interpretation, both in an article and in her *Materialien zu einem hethitischen Thesaurus*⁶. She saw that "to drink a god" amounts to the same as "to drink the cup of a god;" the short phrase is simply an abbreviation of the longer.

The equivalence of "drinking the cup of a god" and "drinking a god" is confirmed by KBo 15.36 col. iii (Stormgod of Kuliwišna). What preceded the preserved part must have contained the "drinking" of D]LAMMA. In line 3, king and queen "drink" the Stormgod of the Army. The text continues (6-7) *mān D]ISKUR.KI.KAL<.BAD>-ma UL ekuzi nu EGIR GAL D]LAMMA D]IŠTAR ŠĒRI ekuzi* "But if he does not 'drink' the Stormgod of the Army, he 'drinks' Ištar of the Field after the cup of D]LAMMA." Kammenhuber wrote that "the action is based on deeper, magical concepts" ("eine Handlung, der sicher tiefere magische Vorstellungen zugrunde liegen").⁷ In other words, she accepted the literal interpretation and its implication of magical thinking - at least for the early period.

If I understand her presentation in *Materialien* correctly, Kammenhuber thinks that in later texts the same phrase means "to give the deity to drink" ("die Gottheit tränken"). I confess that I do not understand why the phrase should mean something different in the late period and how such a reinterpretation might have come about. If there was a reinterpretation of the phrase in the late period I would think that it was to "drink in honor of, drink to, the deity."

We saw that Carruba had shown that *akuwanna pai* "give to drink" is not equivalent to the expression "drink a god." If the latter meant "give the god to drink" one would expect it to be occasionally replaced by *aku-*

⁶ A. Kammenhuber, "Heth. *haššus 2-e ekuzi* 'Der König trinkt zwei'" *Studi Micenei ed Egeo-Anatolici* 14 (1971) 143-159; idem and A. Archi, "*aku-eku-*", in: *Materialien zu einem hethitischen Thesaurus* (Heidelberg, 1976-78), No. 5 in Lieferung 4-8 (with consecutive pagination), esp. Lfg. 5, pp. 121ff.

⁷ SMEA 14, 153.

wanna *pai*-, but this is not the case (I found one example of DINGIR-LIM-ni *adanna akuwanna pāi*, Mat. 6 p. 241, but this refers to regular provisions, not to the *eku*- ceremony). The indirect object to *akuwanna pai*- is normally a human being (or an animal), not a deity.

Two passages in the ritual for the dead which seem to contradict this statement call for comment:

7. a) EGIR-*anda-ma apēl* ZI-ŠU 3-ŠU *ekuzi* . . . (music and recitation) *mahḥan-ma-šāi* IM]A 3 KASKAL-NI ANA ZI-ŠU *akuwan*<*na*> *pianzi* (KUB 30.19+ i 45-47, p. 34)

- b) EGIR-*pa-ma* ANA ZI-ŠU *akuw*[*anna*] *pianzi nu* GEŠTIN 3-ŠU *ekuzi*] KUB 39.17 iii 5-6, p. 86)

Here *akuwanna pianzi* must be understood in connection with the *ekuzi* phrase which precedes or follows, respectively. In the first example the enclitic pronoun -*šāi* is the person to whom one gives to drink; it is the celebrant who performs the "drinking." In b the pronoun is lacking, but still the person who drinks wine must be the celebrant, and it must be he to whom they give to drink. The dative "to his soul" then must belong to the infinitive *akuwanna*, not to *pianzi*. This then is another example of *aku/eku* with dative "to drink to" (cf. above, no. 4). Thus, these two passages cannot be used as examples of "give to drink to the deity."

To return to the interpretation of the *eku*- phrase as "to drink to the deity", Melchert recently reconstructed the "syntactic transformation"⁸ leading to this use, by comparing *eku*- with the deity normally in the accusative but occasionally in the dative, with *šipant*-, which has the deity normally in the dative but occasionally in the accusative. Even without Melchert's article I have used the version "drink to a god" orally and in the work on the Chicago Dictionary. Recently G. Neumann⁹ lauded Singer for having used this translation in his edition of the KILAM Festival, thus having done away with "unfounded spe-

⁸ H. C. Melchert, "God-Drinking: A Syntactic Transformation in Hittite", *Journal of Indo-European Studies* 9 (1981) 245-254.

⁹ G. Neumann, *Indogermanische Forschungen* 91 (1986) 378 n. 1, in his review of I. Singer, *The Hittite KILAM Festival* (StBoT 27-28, 1983-84).

culations concerning the history of religion" ("haltlose religionsgeschichtliche Spekulationen").

Still, there is the cup of the deity which the king drinks. Kammenhuber correctly pointed out that the king, immediately after drinking, pours the cup (*šipanti*) into a bowl (*huppar*).

8. GAL ^PUTU Ū ^PMezzu[*lla*] *akuwanzi* LUGAL-uš GAL-AM *huppari šipanti* (KBo 17.74 + KBo 30.66 iii 19f.)

It follows that the king does not drink the whole content of the cup.

The phrase "drink the cup of the deity" is, so far, attested only in this Old Hittite festival text. In its place another text has the formulation "drink the god from a cup."

9. a) LUGAL-uš GUB-aš ^PKattišḫapin IŠTU GAL *ekuzi* (KUB 2.13 vi 3-4)

- b) LUGAL-uš TUŠ-aš DINGIR.MEŠ URU-LIM GAL-az 1-ŠU *ekuzi* (ibid. 25-26)

This text belongs to the old Festival of the Month although the actual tablet is a late copy.¹⁰ In a description of part of the AN.TAḪ.ŠUM festival, after a long enumeration of deities who are objects of "drinking", a sum total is given:

10. ŠU.NÍGIN 15 GAL-AM "Total: fifteen cups" (KUB 10.81: 14). Similarly, after an enumeration of Hurrian deities with *eku*-, we find the statement that the cups are "collected" or "ended".

11. GAL.HI.A *taruḫtari* (KBo 33.215 v 25).

In a Middle Hittite ritual for the goddess Ningal we find the cup written as Akkadian *kāsu*:

12. EGIR-*anda-ma-kan* ^{DUG}GA-A-ŽI-ŠA GEŠTIN-*it šunnai*
nan-šan appa dāi
nu adanna ḫalziyari
nu akuwanna pianzi

¹⁰ Kammenhuber, *SMEA* 14, 156f., dates this text to the late period on the basis of the late manuscripts and considers this formula as the result of an "Umdeutungsprozess."

Her example no. 28, KUB 2.13 iv 12 ff., may be another example of the liquid being the god, which I discuss at the end of this paper. But since *šipant*- with accus. of the DN could also be explained differently I refrain from using it.

nu SAL.LUGAL *hantezzi palši* . . . [. . .] ^DNupatik *ekuzi* (KUB 45-47 iv 6-11)

"Thereafter he/she fills her cup with wine and puts it back. Then the meal is called, and one gives (something) to drink. The queen 'drinks' first . . . (and?) Nupatik."

The feminine possessive pronoun (Akkadian *-ša*) probably refers to the goddess Ningal who is mentioned in col. iii 28 and is the object of 'drinking' in the paragraph following the passage quoted.

In the late cult texts for the goddess *Huwaššanna* the "cup of the goddess" is explicitly mentioned but apparently not used for the 'drinking' of the goddess:

13. *našta* GAL.DINGIR-LIM *šanhanzi nan IŠTU KAŠ šunnanzi*
nan LÚ.É. DINGIR-LIM ANA DINGIR-LIM parā epzi
namma-an EGIR-pa udai
nu-kan uizzi apāt GAL.DINGIR-LIM KAŠ ANA ^{SAL}*alhui*tra
 EN.SISKUR-ya *katta lahui*
nat-kan arha NAG-anzi
 GAL.DINGIR-LIM-ma-ššan EGIR-pa *zeriyalliyas dai*
nu ANA ^{SAL}*alhui*tra EN.SISKUR-ya *akuwanna pianzi*
nu ^D*Huwaššanna*TUŠ-aš *akuwanzi* (KUB 17.24 iii 12-20)

Here the "cup of the goddess", having been filled with beer and proffered to the goddess, is poured 'down' to the priestess and the patron who drink it out, whereupon the cup of the goddess is put back on the pot-stand. Thereafter one gives the priestess and the patron to drink, but obviously not from the cup of the goddess which is now empty, and they do the 'drinking'

The cup, Sum. GAL, Akk. *kāsu*, Hitt. *zeri* (neut.) and *tešsummi* (com.), is not the only vessel used in the drinking ceremony. A special kind of cup, called "good-cup", is used in a Middle Hittite part of the Festival of the Month:

14. LUGAL-uš SAL.LUGAL-aš-a GUB-aš *aššuzerit* ^D*Ištanu* ^D*Palatappinu*
akuwanzi (KBo 20.67 i 18-19)

In another festival we read:

15. LUGAL SAL.LUGAL GUB-aš ^DU É-TIM GAL (and other deities) *andurza IŠTU* ^{GIS}ŠU.NAG.NAG KÙ.GI *akuwanzi* (KBo 4.13 vi 25-27.)

We know nothing about the golden vessel called simply "for drinking."

Occasionally a horn is used:

16. LUGAL-uš GUB-aš *aškaz* ^{GUD}Šerin ^{GUD}Hurriin SÍ-az *ekuzi* (KUB 11.22 v 15-17).

For the two bulls this is certainly appropriate!

Very frequently the drinking is done "with" or "from" an animal-shaped vessel: *IŠTU BIBRI*. Among actual finds there are so-called "Tierkopfsbecher", cups shaped like animal heads. To drink out of these was easy enough. But we may well ask how the drinking from a *bibru* was done if it had the shape of a lion standing on all four legs!

17. LUGAL SAL.LUGAL TUŠ-aš ^DZABABA *IŠTU BIBRI* UR.MAḪ
 4 *arantet akuwanzi* (KUB 10.89 i 20-21)

Maybe the following passage from the late EZEN *hišuwāš* illustrates how it was done:

18. *našta* ^{LÚ}SANGA *namma IŠTU BIBRI* DINGIR-LIM *hāni*
nuššan ANA GAL LUGAL *lahuwai nu* LUGAL-i *pāi*
 LUGAL-uš *waršuli ekuzi* (KBo 15.37 v 19-23)

"Then the priest draws (wine) again from the *bibru* of the deity and pours it into the cup of the king. The king drinks *waršuli*." Here the *bibru* is the vessel which contains the wine and from which it is then distributed to the individual cups. The cult inventories contain the standard line:

19. *BIBRI* ^{HIA}šunnanzi . . . GAL.HIA *aššanuwanzi*

"They fill the *bibrus* and prepare the cups." I understand this in the light of the just discussed text (no. 18): the *bibrus* are filled with the wine which will then be put into the cups for the *eku*-ceremonies for the individual deities. Kammenhuber collected instances where an alternative is given to drink either from a cup or from a *bibru*.¹¹ I would think that the choice was between an ordinary cup and one shaped like an animal head, and that these cases do not contradict what we said about other *bibrus* holding a larger amount of liquid.

Finally I would like to discuss the following text:

¹¹ Materialien, Lfg. 7 p. 331.

20. a) EGIR-*anda-ma* ^DTāru ^DḪašgalā ŠA LUGAL-*ya* ŠUM-ŠU IŠTU GAL.GIR₄ *ekuzi* (music and bread offering) (KUB 55.18ii 2-3)
- b) *naša!* šanhanzi nu ^LSANGA ^DKammamma ^DḪašgalā ŠA LU-GAL-*ya* ŠUM-ŠU GUB-aš IŠTU BIBRI K[Ü.BABBAR] ^AMUSEN *piyanzi*
nan-za-kan katta ANA GAL.GIR₄ laḫuwai
nan-kan IŠTU GAL.GIR₄ ekuzi (music, etc.) (ibid. 6-11)
- c) EGIR-*anda-ma* ^DḪapantaliyan ŠA LUGAL-*ya* ŠUM-*an* IŠTU GAL.GIR₄ *ekuzi* (music but no bread offering. After a gap:) (ibid. 13-15)
- d) [nu] ^DGAL-ŽU GUB-aš IŠTU BIBRI KÜ.BABBAR [A]^{MUSEN} ŠA ^DLAMMA ^{URU}Ḫatti pangau-*ya* *piyanzi*
nat-za-kan katta ANA GAL.ḪIA [GIR₄] laḫuwanzi nat-kan arḫa
akuwanzi (ibid. iv 2-5)

Sections *a* and *c* are clear: "The king's name" is treated as a deity; whether a deceased earlier king is meant is hard to tell. Note that in *a* there are two divine names, but in *c* there is only one. This may be of importance for the understanding of section *b*.

In *b*, SANGA can only be dative since the verb "they give" is in the plural. The difficulty lies in the pronoun *-an* (accus. common gender) in the second and third clauses. If we take ^LSANGA ^DKammamma as "the priest of Kammamma", then there is only one named deity, Ḫašgalā, in the first clause, and the pronoun could refer to this deity *a potiori*, since *lāman* "name" is neuter. If both divine names were objects of "they give" the pronoun *-an* would not be understandable. So I would translate section *b* as follows:

"Then they sweep. To the priest of Kammamma they give the deities Ḫašgalā and King's Name, standing, from a silver *bibru* shaped like an eagle. He pours him (the god) down into an earthenware cup and drinks him out of the earthenware cup."

In section *d*, which comes on the reverse after a lacuna, the pronoun is *-at*, the neuter form. Otherwise this section resembles section *b*. "It" (whatever it may be) is given, this time, to the *panku*-, the "multitude" or "assembly of worshippers", who drink "it" out. According to the structure

of the parallel passages, "it" can only be ^DGAL-ŽU. It seems to me that this "deity" is none other than the cup, Akkadian *kāsu*, Hittite *zeri* (neut.). The spelling GAL-ŽU, rather GAL-SÚ, is attested elsewhere.¹² Here it has the divine determinative, presumably because it is considered a deity just as the other gods in the text. In a similar context it is written without determinative:

21. LUGAL-uš GAL-SÚ *ekuzi ḫuman[ti-ya] akuwanna pianzi* (KBo 15.59 iii 9f.)

"The king drinks the cup; they give everybody to drink."

I cannot tell whether the "god Galzu", whose name appears among those of other deities in festival texts, is always the deified cup; but once the cup was deified it could well have been treated like other deities. However that may be, it seems to me that the passage no. 20 *b* shows that the liquid is the deity, or the deity is the liquid, since here the deity is poured from a *bibru* into a cup from which the celebrant then drinks it. To my mind this proves that the literal understanding of the phrase under discussion is correct. Recently V. G. Ardzinba expressed the same opinion.¹³ I see no reason for shying away from this literal understanding. The purpose seems to have been to partake of the divine character of the deity — or even of the soul of the deceased, that is deified, king or queen.

¹² For GAL-SÚ as writing for *kāsu* cf. A Goetze, JCS 10 (1956) 37 n. 63; for the spelling ^{DUG}GA-A-ŽI idem, JCS 14 (1960) 116.

¹³ V. G. Ardzinba, "The Birth of the Hittite King and the New Year", Oikumene 5 (1986) 91-101, esp. p. 92 n. 8.

Addenda: 1. In example 7 the dative could be taken as direct object of the infinitive: "for — drinking his soul;" see F. Ose, *Supinum und Infinitiv* (MVAeG 47.1, 1 1944) p. 4, cf. H.C. Melchert JCS 31 (1979) 58.

2. The CHD now uses the literal translation.