# Audias fabulas veteres. Anatolian Studies in Honor of Jana Součková-Siegelová

Edited by

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## Marginalia to the Myth of Telipinu

H. Craig Melchert

Among our honorand's many contributions to Hittitology is her edition of the Myth of Hedammu (Siegelová 1971). As a modest token of esteem for her many accomplishments, I offer the following remarks on certain problematic passages from the Myth of Telipinu.<sup>1</sup>

#### 1 The Denigration of the Bee

After Telipinu, son of the Storm-god, has retired in anger, sending the world into chaos, the gods large and small search for him in vain. The Sun-god then sends the mighty eagle to find him, but the eagle fails. The Storm-god himself searches and also fails. The wise Hannahanna goddess then sends the bee. This meets with the sneering skepticism of the Storm-god, who says the following:

(KUB 17.10 i 37–39; restorations after KUB 33.5 ii 12–14)
 nu=war=an paizzi kāš [(NIM.LÀL-aš wemiya)zi par]tauwa=ššet=wa amiyanta apašš=a=uwa amiyanza namma=war=aš hanti tuhšanzi

"Will this bee proceed to find him? His wings are puny, and he too is puny (*lit.* not grown up), and furthermore..."

None of the previous interpretations offered for the last clause is remotely satisfactory: A. Goetze: "Shall they admit that it is greater than they?";<sup>2</sup> C. Kühne: "Werden sie (die Götter) das verstehen?";<sup>3</sup> F. Pecchioli Daddi and A.M. Polvani:

<sup>1</sup> Unless otherwise noted, I take as the basis for the text the transliteration by Laroche (Laroche 1965: 89–110), primarily that of KUB 17.10, which is a Middle Script copy of the Old Hittite text. For translations of the Myth of Telipinu see among others Pecchioli Daddi/Polvani 1990: 71–87, Hoffner 1998: 14–20, and Mazoyer 2003: 73–91.

<sup>2</sup> Goetze 1955: 127.

<sup>3</sup> Kühne 1975: 183.

"Sono essi forse diversi?";<sup>4</sup> J. Puhvel: "they also cut them in two";<sup>5</sup> A. Ünal: "Außerdem sind sie (die Flügel?) auseinander geschnitten?";<sup>6</sup> G. Beckman: "And furthermore they (the gods)...";<sup>7</sup> M. Mazoyer: "et en outre on les choisit (eux) de préference".<sup>8</sup> H.A. Hoffner prudently leaves the entire clause untranslated.<sup>9</sup>

The problem for any analysis is twofold: first, the enclitic pronoun -aš can only be animate nominative singular, referring to the bee as a subject, or animate accusative plural. It cannot refer to the bee as a direct object (Goetze), which would have to be animate accusative singular -an. It likewise cannot refer to the wings as either object (Puhvel) or subject (Ünal), since *partauwa* 'wings' is neuter nominative accusative plural, as shown by the predicate adjective *amiyanta*, and the enclitic pronoun could only be -e (or perhaps -at). Nor can -aš refer to the gods as a subject (Pecchioli Daddi and Polvani), since animate nominative plural would also only appear as -e or -at. The second problem is the apparent transitive present third plural tuhšanzi 'they cut', for which the only likely subject is the gods, but as we have seen there is then no suitable animate plural antecedent to serve as the object. Mazoyer avoids these difficulties by assuming that the third plural tuhšanzi is being used impersonally with an unspecified subject, but his interpretation of the verb as 'choose' is entirely ad hoc and not supported by any evidence.<sup>10</sup>

The solution to this impasse is to suppose that tuh-ša-an-zi is a rare spelling of a word-final sequence of two consonants with -*i* as the "empty vowel", rather than the standard -*a*. The form is thus animate nominative singular /tuhsants/, a predicative participle agreeing with the subject -*aš*, referring to the bee. Such use of final -*Vn-zi* for /-(n)ts/ is attested in Palaic, in texts written by Hittite scribes (e.g. KUB 32.18 i 10 haraš=kuwar=zi panaganzi "The eagle (is) *p*.-ed"). However, I know of no other examples for such an orthography in a Hittite context. I therefore find it more likely that, instead of being a true alternative spelling for final /-Vnts/, the Telipinu example is rather a hypercorrection by the Middle Hittite copyist. Based on Old Hittite/Old Script spellings like *iš-hian-za* for *iš-hi-an-zi* 'they bind', he "improved" *tuh-ša-an-za* into *tuh-ša-an-zi*.

4 Pecchioli Daddi/Polvani 1990: 80.

- 7 Beckman 2003: 152.
- 8 Mazoyer 2003: 75 (see his commentary ibid. 97).
- 9 Hoffner 1998: 15.
- 10 Despite the highly misleading implication of Mazoyer (2003: 97), Güterbock (1964: 106–7 and 1986: 211 n. 10) correctly interprets the verb as 'to cut' in all instances. Kühne's 'verstehen' likewise lacks any foundation, and his translation leaves the enclictic *-aš* unaccounted for.

<sup>5</sup> Puhvel 1991: 93.

<sup>6</sup> Ünal 1994: 817.

Once we read *tuh-ša-an-zi* as a participle /tuhsants/, the syntax of the clause is perfectly normal, and the sense is equally clear: "Furthermore, he (the bee) is cut off in front". The Storm-god is ridiculing the bee for being snub-nosed or flat-faced—it is not only puny, but also ugly, particularly in contrast with the mighty eagle and his impressive beak. Beyond the invidious comparison with the eagle, we are probably dealing with a broader cultural prejudice. Depictions of the Hittites and their gods suggest that a prominent nose was a desirable feature. I cite as further support for this notion the exorbitantly high fine (30 minas!) for biting off the nose of a free person in the Hittite Laws (versus just 3 shekels for slaves).<sup>11</sup>

#### 2 The Alleged "grains of Telipinu"

After the goddess Kamrušepa has seen the angry Telipinu (driven from his hiding place by the bee's sting) and stopped his wrath, she prepares to ritually remove all of his anger:

(2) (KUB 17.10 iii 3–10; restorations mine, HCM)
<sup>d</sup>Kamrušepaš DINGIR<sup>MEŠ</sup>-naš EGIR-pa tēzzi īt[ten] DINGIR<sup>MEŠ</sup>-eš
kāšma <sup>d</sup>Hapantali <sup>d</sup>UTU-aš UDU<sup>HI.A</sup>=ŠU w[ešiyatta?] n=ašta 12 UDU.
NÍTA<sup>HI.A</sup> kar(a)šten nu <sup>d</sup>Telipinuwaš t[uekk]uš aniyami dāhhun=za
pattar 1 LIM IGI<sup>HI.A</sup>-wa nu=ššan kar(a)ššus šA <sup>d</sup>Kamrušepa UDU.NÍTA<sup>HI.A</sup>
=ŠU išhūhhun § nu <sup>d</sup>Telipinui šēr arha duwān warnunun tuwann=a
warnunun n=ašta <sup>d</sup>Telipinui tuggaz=šēt<sup>i</sup> idālu=ššit dāhhun...

"Kamrušepa reports back to the gods: 'Go, oh gods! Hapantali is h[erding?] the sheep of the Sun-god. **Shear** twelve rams, so that I can treat the **limbs** of Telipinu. I have taken a basket (with) a thousand 'eyes' (= holes; i.e. a sieve). I have poured on it the **shearings** of the rams of Kamrušepa. I have burned from over Telipinu (down) away in this direction, and I have burned (down away) in that direction. I have taken from Telipinu's limbs his evil', (I have taken his sin, I have taken his wrath, I have taken his anger, I have taken his \_\_, I have taken his sullenness)."

<sup>11</sup> See Hoffner 1997: 26–27 and his commentary 178.

My restoration w[ešiyatta] follows A. Goetze, F. Pecchioli Daddi/A.M. Polvani and G. Beckman, contra H.A. Hoffner,<sup>12</sup> but this does not affect the rest of the interpretation. For the correct interpretation of 'basket with a thousand eyes' see M. Popko.<sup>13</sup>

Aside from A. Goetze: "I want to fix long days for Telipinu"(??)<sup>14</sup> and M. Mazoyer,<sup>15</sup> all scholars known to me but one accept the restoration by E. Laroche of *k*[*ar-aš-š*]*u-uš* after <sup>d</sup>*Telipinuwaš*,<sup>16</sup> most assuming an alleged 'grains of Telipinu', which are again mentioned two sentences later, where they are *equated with* the rams of Kamrušepa! Thus A. Ünal, H.A. Hoffner, and G. Beckman.<sup>17</sup> F. Pecchioli Daddi and A.M. Polvani also translate 'his grains', but impossibly construe 'the rams of Kamrušepa' with the verb 'burned' of the next clause.<sup>18</sup> V. Haas/G. Wilhelm and E. Masson take *karaššuš* rather as 'the chosen' (rams).<sup>19</sup> Only C. Kühne<sup>20</sup> sees that the restored word must refer to a body part of Telipinu and that the attested *karaššuš* refers to something cut off, but he does not fully pursue these implications.<sup>21</sup>

The standard interpretation of this passage faces both linguistic and contextual problems. First of all, the noun kar(a)s (clearly to be read /kars/) is a *neuter s*-stem, which cannot possibly have an animate plural kar(a)sšuš. Furthermore, /kars/ refers to a *kind* of grain. It cannot possibly be used to mean 'grain' in the sense of individual grains, for which the Hittite word was surely *warwalan*- (NUMUN) 'seed'. That /kars/ means 'castrated parts of an animal' (Mazoyer)<sup>22</sup> is wildly implausible. Even if kar(a)sšuš could mean individual grains, it is nonsensical to scatter grains onto a sieve. They will fall through the holes, and there will be nothing to burn. Furthermore, individual grains burn only with great difficulty and then merely produce charred bits—virtually no smoke, as needed for what is clearly a fumigation of Telipinu. Finally, no one has ever explained how or why the 'grains' of Telipinu would be equated with the rams of Kamrušepa! The entire passage makes no coherent sense by this interpretation.

- 16 Laroche 1965: 94.
- 17 Ünal 1994: 818; Hoffner 1998: 16; Beckman 2003: 152.
- 18 Pecchioli Daddi/Polvani 1990: 81.
- 19 Haas/Wilhelm 1974: 25; Masson 1991: 133.
- 20 Kühne 1975: 185.
- 21 See also Masson 1991: 133 with note 23.
- 22 Mazoyer 2003: 102.

<sup>12</sup> Goetze 1955: 127; Pecchioli Daddi/Polvani 1990: 81; Beckman 2003: 152 and Hoffner 1998: 16.

<sup>13</sup> Popko 1974.

<sup>14</sup> Goetze 1955: 127.

<sup>15</sup> Mazoyer 2003: 48, with an impossible interpretation 77 and commentary 102–103.

The description of the fumigation of Telipinu makes it absolutely clear that it is his *limbs* that are being treated and cleansed of anger and sin (*tuggaz=šēt*). We must therefore restore t[u-ek-k]u-uš 'limbs' in the clause with *aniyami*: "so that I can treat the limbs of Telipinu". The traces in the published copy are fully compatible with this reading (note the reading of Otten *apud* Mazoyer of w[aar-k]u-uš, which is contextually far less likely). The text KBo 8.73 ii 1–10 cited by Haas and Wilhelm confirms the application to body parts.

The verb *karš*- 'to cut' certainly is used to mean 'cut out (animals) from a herd', hence 'select', but the Hittites must have also had a verb for 'to shear' (sheep), and by all criteria *karš*- is surely that verb. Kamrušepa is instructing the gods to shear twelve rams. The product of the shearing will of course be wool shearings. One productive way to form result nouns in Hittite is with *animate* deverbative nouns in *-a*-: e.g. *parša*- 'crumb' from *parš*- 'to break' (bread), *šarra*- 'portion' < *šarra*- 'to divide', *wāga*- 'bite' < *wag*- 'to bite'. We may therefore likewise trivially assume a noun *kar*(*a*)*šša*- 'shearing', with accusative plural *kar*(*a*)*ššuš* < *karš*- 'cut, shear'.

Freshly shorn wool is also not easy to set on fire if it is left in large clumps. It will burn much better if *scattered* over a large basket with *air holes*. Once set afire, due to its lanolin content, it will produce a greasy, black smoke, ideally suited for fumigation. Previous translations have wrongly ignored the force of *arha* in *šēr arha duwān warnunun*. The basket with the burning wool shearings is not waved over Telipinu or merely beside him. It is moved in a sweeping motion, starting from his head, proceeding down his body, and then swung *away* from his body, first on one side and then the other. The away motion is crucial, since the evils picked up by the smoke are thus removed from Telipinu's limbs. The basic technique is the same as with *šēr arḥa waḥnu-* 'whirl over (and away from)', in which various scape animals and purificatory substances are swung once over a person's head, picking up evils with the inward arc and removing them with the outward arc. The only difference is that here the basket with the smoke is swung from head to toe on both sides of the body and then away.

#### 3 The Alleged "stifling" of the Gods

The opening preserved lines of the myth describe the disruption of the natural order caused by Telipinu's withdrawal in anger:

- (3) (KUB 17.10 i 5–9; restorations mine, HCM)
  - <sup>GIŠ</sup>luttāuš kammaraš IṢBAT É-er tuḥḥuiš [IṢBAT] INA GUNNI=ma kalmīšeniš wišūriyantat[i **ištananiš** ŠA] DINGIR<sup>MEŠ</sup> wišūriyantati INA TÙR anda UDU<sup>ḤI.A</sup> KIMIN INA É.GUD andan GUD<sup>ḤI.A</sup> wišūriyantati UDU-uš=za SÍLA=SÚ mimmaš GUD=ma=<z>AMAR=ŠU mimmaš

"A mist seized the windows; smoke [seized] the house. On the hearth the burning logs were \_\_. [The altars of] the gods were \_\_. In the fold the sheep were \_\_. In the corral the cattle were \_\_. The ewe refused her lamb. The cow refused her calf."

All scholars to my knowledge have accepted the restoration in the fourth clause by Laroche<sup>23</sup> of [*iš-ta-na-na-aš an-da*] (or similar), taking DINGIR<sup>MEŠ</sup> as the subject of the verb *wišūriyantati*. The verb is consistently rendered as 'were suffocated, stifled'.<sup>24</sup>

The problem with this interpretation is that at the end of the myth, when all the disruptions just described are made right upon the return of Telipinu, the clause describing the altars of the gods reads (KUB 17.10 iv 22): *ištananiš* DINGIR<sup>MEŠ</sup>-*naš handantati* "The altars of the gods were put in order/alignment" or "The altars were put in order for the gods". See correctly A. Goetze: "The altars were set right for the gods';<sup>25</sup> E. Masson: "les autels sont dressés pour les dieux";<sup>26</sup> M. Mazoyer: "les autels des dieux furent en ordre";<sup>27</sup> F. Pecchioli Daddi and A.M. Polvani: "furono allestiti gli altari degli dei";<sup>28</sup> J. Puhvel: "the altars were set aright for the gods".<sup>29</sup> The renderings of C. Kühne: "Die Altäre ordneten sich den Göttern unter";<sup>30</sup> A. Ünal: "Da fügten sich die Altäre den Göttern";<sup>31</sup> H.A. Hoffner: "the altars were in harmony again with the gods"<sup>32</sup> and G. Beckman: "the altars were reconciled with the gods"<sup>33</sup> imply a conflict *between* the altars and the gods for which there is no evidence. The crucial

- 27 Mazoyer 2003: 79.
- 28 Pecchioli Daddi/Polvani 1990: 83.
- 29 Puhvel 1991: 100.
- 30 Kühne 1975: 186.
- 31 Ünal 1994: 818.
- 32 Hoffner 1998: 17.
- 33 Beckman 2003: 153.

<sup>23</sup> Laroche 1965: 90.

<sup>24</sup> Kühne 1975: 182; Pecchioli Daddi/Polvani 1990: 79; Masson 1991: 124; Ünal 1994: 816; Hoffner 1998: 15; Mazoyer 2003: 73; Beckman 2003: 151.

<sup>25</sup> Goetze 1995: 128.

<sup>26</sup> Masson 1991: 138.

point, however, is that it is the *altars* that are the subject of the verb *handantati*, not the gods, so we must restore the opening passage accordingly. It should be clear that altars cannot be 'stifled' or 'suffocated'.

This interpretation is confirmed by the fuller description of the same events in KUB 33.19 iii 2–7, apropos of the disappearance of another deity,<sup>34</sup> which is superior to the compressed and corrupt passage in KUB 17.10 iv 22–24, where the verb *tarnaš* 'left' is wrongly used of the hearth, sheep, and cattle:

(4) (KUB 33.19 iii 2-7)

 $[^{GIŠ}AB]$ -ya kammaraš tarn[aš É-er tuhhuwaiš t]arnaš ZAG.GAR. RA-aš handattat [šerr=a=ššan DINGIR<sup>ME</sup>]<sup>š</sup> hantandati [GUNNI=ma handa]tta<t> šerr=a=ššan <sup>GIŠ</sup>kalmiyēš [hantan]tat <sup>É</sup>hīli=kan anda UDU<sup>HI.A</sup> hantantati [INA É.GU]D=ma GUD<sup>HI.A</sup> hantantati

"The mist left the windows. The smoke left the house. The altar was put in order, and [also on it the go]ds were put in order. [The hearth was put in o]rder, and also on it the burning logs were put in order. In the fold the sheep were put in order, and in the corral the cattle were put in order."

All available evidence argues that *wišūriya*- means 'twist' or 'press' (with *anda* = 'twist, press together'). The only alleged evidence for 'stifle, suffocate' is the passage being discussed, where 'altars' as the subject excludes that interpretation. The evidence assembled by Carruba<sup>35</sup> falsifies his own conclusions:

(5) KUB 9.6 + 35.39 iii 20–23 (Ritual of Kuwatalla; see Carruba's own translation 1966: 50!)
 nu 2 <sup>GIŠ</sup>PISAN<sup>HIA</sup> ŠA GI appezz[iya]z <sup>MUNUS</sup>ŠU.GI harzi EN SISKUR=ma=šši=(y)aš mena[hh]anda IŠTU QATI=ŠU ēpzi nu=uš anda wešuriyanzi nu=uš arha duwarnanzi

"The 'old woman' holds two tubes of reed from behind. The ritual client facing her takes hold of them with his hands. They twist them together and break them."

<sup>34</sup> See Laroche 1965: 123.

<sup>35</sup> Carruba 1966: 50–52.

(6) KUB 32.49a iii 8–9 (Libation to the Throne of Hebat) MUŠEN<sup>HLA</sup>=ma partāuwar=šet [an]da QATAMMA wišūriškezzi

"While they likewise press together the wings of the birds."

(7) KUB 39.57 i 4 and 8 (Funeral Rite) ZI<sup>HLA</sup> A.BÁR anda wišurianteš...ZI-TUM wišuriantan arḥa lānzi

"Souls of lead (are) pressed in (to a figurine)...They release the (op-) pressed soul."  $^{36}$ 

(8) KUB 5.1 iii 51 (Oracular Inquiry about Campaign Routes) kī kuit KASKAL <sup>URU</sup>Tanizila wišureškezzi

"Seeing that he (the god) is (op)pressing the road to Tanizila..."

(9) KUB 33.51, 4–6 (Disappearance of Hannahanna)
 <sup>d</sup>MAH-aš ZI=ŠU <sup>GIŠ</sup>waršamaš wišūriyattati nu <sup>GIŠ</sup>waršaman mahhan lukkanzi

"The soul of Hannahanna has been pressed together (like) kindling. As they set fire to kindling..."

 (10) KBo 31.76 lk. Kol. 8–10 (Disappearance of Hannahanna) nu hatugaš miyēš [-a]nza=ma memi wišuriyanza=ma EGIR-pa [han]dahhut nu=tta takšuliandu

"(Being) frightful, become mild! (Being) [silent?], speak! (Being) oppressed/out of sorts, be made right again! Let them reconcile/pacify you!"

The lexical entries in KBo 1.42 ii 26 and 40 also point to 'twist' and 'constrict': *wišuriyauwar* = Akkadian *zâru* 'to twist';<sup>37</sup> *wešuriyawar* = Akkadian *ḥanāqu* 'to compress, constrict; strangle', also 'to become annoyed'.<sup>38</sup>

 <sup>36</sup> Compare with Carruba (1966: 51) also KUB 38.13, 9: ZI-TUM GUŠKIN anda dam-me-i[n-kV-]
 "impr[ess] a soul of gold...". See also Kapełuś 2010: 262, 267–268.

<sup>37</sup> Thus with Goetze 1927: 129, contra Carruba 1966: 50; see CAD 21.72–3.

<sup>38</sup> See CAD 6.77.

The correct meaning has now been confirmed by a new occurrence in the Hurro-Hittite Bilingual:

(11) KBo 32.14 ii 47–49 (Hurro-Hittite Bilingual, Parables) man=wa=šši=kan kiššaraš arha duwarnattari kunnaš=man=wa=šši=kan išhunaūš arha wišūriattari

"Would that his (the smith's) hand be broken off! Would that his right upper arm be wrenched off!"

Contra E. Neu<sup>39</sup> *išhunau-* means 'upper arm', not 'sinew', and the force of *arha* could be 'completely', but 'off' is more likely. In any case, the upper arm is at least twisted until it has been wrenched out of the socket. It is obvious that an upper arm cannot be 'stifled' or 'choked'.

Outside our passage the Hittite verb is used exclusively of inanimate objects that are twisted or pressed together and of the soul, where it likewise most plausibly means either 'oppressed' (< 'pressed') or 'out of sorts' (< 'twisted'). This sense also fits all the subjects in our passage. When neatly stacked logs burn, they inevitably collapse on each other and become twisted and pressed together, so that they burn poorly (hence the need for a poker to separate and reorder them). When herds of domestic animals are disturbed (especially by a threatening natural event such as an earthquake or an impending storm), they typically crowd together and even attempt to climb onto each other. Finally, the altars of the gods were certainly neatly ordered and (the images of) the gods on them (see KUB 20.1 iii 8 *maḥḥan=ma* DINGIR.MEš *taninuwanzi* "But when they arrange/put in order the gods..."), and their being crowded together and made crooked with the disappearance of Telipinu would have been regarded as another serious sign of a world gone awry.

The verb that expresses the restoration of order and harmony, both physical and spiritual, is  $hand\bar{a}(i)$ - 'arrange, set right'. The concrete notion of *order* and proper alignment is made clear by the simile used to express Telipinu's own return to his normal state, but it has generally been misinterpreted:

(12) KUB 17.10 ii 31–32 GI-az lazzaiš māḥḥan ḥandānza zik <sup>d</sup>Telipinuš QATAMMA ḥandaḥḥut

"As a/the *l*. reed is well-aligned (i.e. straight), so may you, Telipinu, become well-aligned!"

39 Neu 1996: 153.

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#### Compare also:

(13) KUB 33.8 iii 19–22

GI.DÙG.GA maḥḥan ḥandanza z[ig=a I]TTI LUGAL MUNUS.LU[GAL] ANA KUR <sup>uru</sup>Ḫatti QATAMMA ḥandanza ē[š]

"As the 'sweet reed' is well-aligned, so may you, Telipinu, be thus wellaligned toward the king and queen and the land of Hatti."

See correctly E. Neu: '(wohl) gefügt'<sup>40</sup> and E. Masson: 'dressé droit'<sup>41</sup> against all others (C. Kühne: 'sich flechten läßt/sich fügen';<sup>42</sup> F. Pecchioli Daddi and A.M. Polvani: 'disponibile';<sup>43</sup> A. Ünal: 'biegsam/fügsam';<sup>44</sup> H.A. Hoffner: 'pleasant';<sup>45</sup> M. Mazoyer: 'prêt';<sup>46</sup> G. Beckman: 'intertwined').<sup>47</sup> Whatever the sense of *lazzaiš*, the outstanding characteristic of a reed is that it is *straight*. Moreover, it is straight because its individual sections are all *aligned* in a straight line. For the Hittites, like other Indo-European speakers, straight was good, and crooked or twisted was bad. All things that became misaligned through Telipinu's disappearance were to be made straight again, and likewise Telipinu's out-of-joint soul was again to become properly aligned.

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- 42 Kühne 1975: 185.
- 43 Pecchioli Daddi/Polvani 1990: 81.
- 44 Ünal 1994: 818.
- 45 Hoffner 1998: 16.
- 46 Mazoyer 2003: 76.
- 47 Beckman 2003: 152.

<sup>40</sup> Neu 1968: 41.

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