

Comments on the Kuttamuwa Stele

The text of the recently discovered Kuttamuwa Stele has provided welcome direct confirmation in the belief that funeral steles of the North Syrian milieu in the Iron Age contained the soul of the deceased. This had previously only been suspected: see p. 104 in the article by Manfred Hutter, *Kultstelen und Baityloi*, in B. Janowski et al., *Religionsgeschichtliche Beziehungen zwischen Kleinasien, Nordsyrien, und dem Alten Testament*. Göttingen 1993. The presence of the soul of the deceased in the stele also explains why the same word is used in the Luvic languages to refer both to funerary stelae and to cult stelae that were thought to contain a deity: Hieroglyphic Luvian /*tasanza/*, Lydian *tašēv*, Lycian *kumezijē θθē*, derived from the same source as Greek *theós* 'god'. See now Calvert Watkins, pp. 137-140 in "Hermit Crabs," or New Wine in Old Bottles: Anatolian and Hellenic Connections from Homer and Before to Antiochus I of Commagene and After, in Billie Collins et al., *Anatolian Interfaces: Hittites, Greeks and their Neighbors*, Oxford: 2008. See Hutter's article for discussion of the wider context of Hittite *huwaši* stones and the degree of functional overlap with *sikkānu*.

Contrary to published claims, however, the Kuttamuwa stele is certainly not the first evidence for belief in the soul distinct from the body in this era and region. Such a belief was already well established for Tabal in the 8th century, in the Hieroglyphic Luvian inscription KULULU 4: see J. David Hawkins, *More Late Hittite Funerary Monuments*, in *Studies Tahşin Özgüç* (Ankara, 1989) pp. 189-197. The text is now also available in J. David Hawkins, *Corpus of Hieroglyphic Luwian Inscriptions. Volume I. Inscriptions of the Iron Age* (Berlin/New York, 2000), pp. 445-447. So such a belief in a text attributed to a man with the Luvian name Kuttamuwa is no surprise. The distinction of soul and body was already part of the belief system of the Hittites in the mid-second millennium. See Annelies Kammenhuber, *Die hethitischen Vorstellungen von Seele und Leib, Herz und Leibesinnerem, Kopf und Person*. *ZA* 56 (1964) 150-212, 303-305 and *ZA* 57 (1965) 177-222, 330-332.