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On Hittite *mūgā(i)-*

H. Craig MELCHERT

Alfonso Archi's impressively broad expertise and interests include the Hittites' and other ancient peoples' conception of the relationship between deities and humans and communication between them. In grateful recognition of his many contributions to Hittitology I offer the following reappraisal of one of the key Hittite terms for human interaction with deities.

The communis opinio regarding the Hittite verb *mūgā(i)-* is that it is a verbum dicendi: 'pray, entreat, beseech'; 'beten, bitten, anflehen'²; 'invoke, evoke, entreat'³; 'implore, pray (to), beseech, entreat, invoke; evoke; treat (ritually) by prayer'⁴. There has been only one significant dissenting interpretation, 'ébranler, émouvoir, remuer', by E. Laroche in his seminal study of Hittite prayer⁵. As I will show below, the evidence of the texts clearly vindicates Laroche's analysis and excludes a verb of speaking. I myself can add only one crucial argument to the insights of O. Gurney and the masterful treatment of E. Laroche, which has been unjustly rejected and in some cases willfully dismissed in the service of an etymology that itself is totally without merit.

Hittite *mūgā(i)-* is attested in all but a handful of instances in a ritual context that seeks to induce the return of an absent or angry deity or the alienated spirit of a dead person. The following are typical:

- (1) *nu=tta kāša mukiškemi nindaḫaršit [(^{DUG}išpa)]nduzit*, 'I am hereby *m.-ing* you with leavened bread and libations' (KUB 24.2 obv. 12; prayer of Mursili II, NH).

See the further example *ibid.* obv. 5-6. The intervening lines specify that the god Telipinu is to come from wherever in the world he may be.

- (2) *mān=šan °Telipinuš=a kuedanikki nakkiešzi ug=a DINGIR.MEŠ-aš ud-[dār me]maḫḫi t=an mugami*, 'Whenever Telipinu becomes a burden

¹ O. Gurney, "Hittite prayers of Mursili II", *AAA* 27 (1940) 49.

² J. Friedrich, *HW* (1952) 144 and J. Tischler, *HEG* Band II, Lfg. 5-6 (1990) 226.

³ *CHD* L-N 319 and A. Kloekhorst, *Etymological Dictionary of the Hittite Inherited Lexicon* (Leiden 2008) 585.

⁴ J. Puhvel, *HED* Volume 6 (2004) 177.

⁵ E. Laroche, *La prière hittite: vocabulaire et typologie* (École pratique des Hautes Études. V^e section, sciences religieuses. Annuaire, tome 72; 1964) 20-24.

on someone, I speak the words of the gods and *m.* him' (VBoT 58 iv 8-10).

- (3) *kiššann=a memai man=wa=za šānteš našma=wa=šmaš=kan arḫa kuiški ḫiittiyan talliyan mugān ḫarzi nu=wa=šmaš apāš idāluš ḫuwappaš ḫarwašiya pedi mukišket kinuna=wa=šmaš kāša anzāš parā ḫandanni* ^{UTU}-i kattan aššuli ḫiittiyanneškeuwani talleškeuwani mukišgaueni ^{SISKUR}=ya=šmaš šanizzi parkui pešgaueni, 'And he also speaks as follows: "Should you be angry, or (if) someone has drawn away, allured⁶ and *m.*-ed you, and that evil wicked one has been *m.*-ing you in a secret place, now we are in providence under the Sun-god drawing, alluring, and *m.*-ing you for well-being. We are also giving you pleasant pure rituals' (KUB 15.32 i 46-54; evocation ritual 'when they draw the gods on the paths', NH).

- (4) *mān=kan* ^{LAMMA} ^{KUŠ}kuršaš [kuedani]kki arḫa talliyanza *n=an mugāmi*, 'If the Tutelary Deity of the Hunting Bag has been lured away from someone, I *m.* him' (KUB 30.65 ii 7-8; tablet catalogue, NH).

Parallels such as (3) make it clear that *arḫa talliyanza* in (4) means 'lured away' and that *mūgā(i)-* describes the action by which the absent deity is induced to return. One should ignore the false translations in *CHD* L-N 321 and by Puhvel, *HED* 6, 177.

- (5) *nu=šši* ^{ULILIYAŠŠIN} šipantaḫḫi *n=an* ^{INA} UD.3.KAM *mūgāmi*, 'I sacrifice to Uliliyassi for him and *m.* her for three days' (KUB 9.27+7.8 i 3-4; ritual of Paskuwatti against impotence, pre-NH/NS).
- (6) *nu=ddu=za kāša mukiške(mi) tallieškemi*, 'I am hereby *m.*-ing and alluring you' (KUB 7.5 i 23; same text).

In the preceding lines i 13-16 the goddess is asked to come to the client from wherever in the world she is.

- (7) ^{INA} UD.1.KAM=*ma* 3-šU *mūgami karūwariwar* ^{UD.KAM}-ti *ištarna pedi* 1=šU *nekuz meḫur* 1=šU *memiyanuš=kan anda apūš=pat memiškemi*, 'On the first day I *m.* three times: at daybreak, once at midday, once at twilight. And I insert those same words' (KUB 7.5 ii 20-24; same text).

⁶ For Hittite *talliye-* as 'to draw, allure' see E. Laroche, *Prière hittite* 27; H. A. Hoffner Jr., "Paskuwatti's Ritual Against Sexual Impotence", *AuOr* 5 (1987) 276 & 285, and H. C. Melchert, "Hittite *talliye/a-* 'to draw, allure'", in: Y. Cohen et al., *Pax Hethitica: Studies on the Hittites and their Neighbours in Honour of Itamar Singer on the Occasion of his 65th Birthday* (Wiesbaden 2010) 226-232.

Compare KUB 30.65 + KBo 31.5 ii 6: *mān* ^U*Uliliaššin mūgāmi*.

- (8) *nu* ^UTU ^UArinna ^UKÜ.BABBAR-ši *INA* UD.7.KAM *mukeškenun* *INA* ^UArinna *INA* UD.7.KAM *mukeškenun* *n=ašta kī AWATE^{MEŠ} anda me-miškenun mūgāuwaš=ma arḫayan ḫanti tuppi*, 'I *m*-ed the Sun-goddess of Arinna in Hattusha for seven days. I *m*-ed (her) in Arinna for seven days, and I inserted these words, but (of the ritual) of *m*. there is a separate tablet set aside' (KUB 24.3 iv 3-8; Prayer of Mursili II, colophon, NH).
- (9) 1 *TUPPU AWAT* ^UAllaitūraḫi [*mān...*] *n=an kiššan muga[mi Q(ATI)]*, 'One tablet. The words of A.: [when a god is angry(?)] I *m*. him as follows' (KBo 14.68 i 3-4).

The duplicate KUB 30.51 i 9 has rather *aniy[ami]* 'I treat ritually'! There is no basis for assuming that object is a human just in this one instance (contra *CHD* L-N 322). On the basis of passages like (11) below I restore rather with Laroche, *CTH* (1971) 158. That the action expressed by *mūgā(i)-* refers to a ritual act and not to speaking is confirmed by the following:

- (10) *INA* UD.7.KAM=*ma mugānzi mugāuwarr=a šarā danzi ta āppāi*, 'They *m*. on the seventh day, and they also pick up the *m*. It is finished' (KUB 30.27 obv. 4-6).

This passage has caused considerable discomfort to those who interpret *mūgā(i)-* as a verb of speaking. The *ad hoc* translation of Puhvel, *HED* 6, 178 'they wind up the imploration' is quite impossible, since *šarā dā-* nowhere has the meaning 'to complete'. It is equally *ad hoc* to set up a separate entry for *mugawar* as 'materials of an invocation/evocation ritual' (*CHD* L-N 324) just to explain away this example. Rather the passage shows that *mūgā(i)-* describes a concrete ritual act the materials of which are gathered up upon its completion (see further below).

- (11) DUB.5.KAM *AWAT* ^UIlima-abi ^U[]U ^UArzakiti ^UMUNUS *katraš mā[(n DINGIR)-LUM]* *uddanaz kuēzqa kartimmiya[nza]* *našma=šši maršaštarriš=ma kuišk[i]* *peran ienza našma=šši=kan UNUTT[UM]* *kuitki ḫarkan^{AN} n=an SAG.GEME.İR.MEŠ mahḫan EGIR-pa mugāizzi ŪL Q[ATI]*, 'Fifth tablet. Words of I. the [] and A. the *k.*: if a [(deity)/(D)X] is angry for some reason, or a sacrilege is committed before him, or some implement of his is ruined, how his servants *m*. him back. (The text) is not complete' (KUB 56.55 iv 8-9).

The clause containing *mūgā(i)-* is misunderstood by Puhvel, *HED* 6, 177-178. See the correct translation of the parallel text in *CHD* L-N 199.

For further examples involving angry deities see KUB 30.51 i 24-26 with the duplicate KUB 30.58 i 9-10 and likewise KUB 30.58 i 11: []*mān* TUKU-*an mugāmi* 'When I *m.* an angry one'.

As indicated above, *mūgā(i)-* is also used to refer to the action of bringing back alienated spirits of the dead:

- (12) [DUB.X.KAM QA]TI *mān=kan akkanza kuedanikki [arḫa ta]liyanza mugauwaš*, '[x tablets. (The text) is comp]lete. Of the (ritual of) *m.* when/if a dead person is lured [away] from someone' (KBo 14.70 i 15-16; catalogue, NH).
- (13) UMMMA 'Za[r...]*x mān=kan akkanza kuedanikki arḫa talliya[nza n=an EG]IR-pa mugāmmi uiyammi*, 'Thus speaks Za[r-]: "If a dead person has been lured away from someone, I *m.* and send [him] back' (KBo 41.1 Ro 1-2; ritual, MH/MS).

The precise interpretation of two ritual occurrences of *mūgā(i)-* remains somewhat unclear due to the presence of lexical items of uncertain meaning, but they are nevertheless important for an overall understanding of the word:

- (14) *nu=tta kī mugāuwaš uddār mummuwā[i?] ēštu nu GEŠTU lagān ḫarak nu=tta kuit LUGAL [MUNUS.LUGAL] memiškanzi n=uš ištamaški*, 'Let these words of the *m.* be *m.* for you. Hold your ear inclined. Whatever the king [and queen] are saying to you, listen to them!' (KUB 33.68 ii 3-5; ritual).

The word *mummuwā[i]* is associated with the substance *parḫuena-*: see KBo 11.14 i 12 ^uUTU-*aš parḫuenaš mumuwai* and KUB 36.96:13 []*x-an ḫmumuwāi* and ibid. 15 []*parḫuenaš galak[tar]*. Its precise sense remains obscure (Puhvel, *HED* 6, 179 suggests *mummuwāi[š?]* 'inducement', while Laroche, *Prière hittite* 22 renders 'efficaces'). It is highly unlikely that the word is a participle to a verb 'to fall' (*CHD* L-N 329).

- (15) *galaktar kitta nu=šši [...]/ galanganza ēš parḫuen[aš kitta] n=aš=ši=pa anda mugānza ē[šdu?]*, 'Balm/soothing is placed. Be(!) soothed for her! *p.* [is placed.] Let him(!) be *m.*-ed to it for her!' (KUB 33.21 iii 17-19; ritual for the Storm-god of Ašmunikal).

One should also compare KUB 33.34 obv. 11: []*parḫuenaš kitta talliyanza ē[š]* '*p.* is placed. Be allured!'. What examples (14) and (15) establish is that the action of a *mugāwar* may well include speech (see also (2) above), but need not do so. In (15) it is clearly the proffered substance *parḫuena-* that acts upon the deity. Compare citation (1) above where bread and wine are employed as enticements.

I know of only four examples of *mūgā(i)-* in non-ritual contexts:

- (16) DINGIR.MEŠ=KA [da]riyanut nu DINGIR.MEŠ=KA mugai... [DINGIR.MEŠ=š]U dariyanut nu DINGIR.MEŠ=ŠU mukiš⟨eš⟩keuwan dāiš, '(Ishtar to Naram-Sin): "Importune/make weary your gods! *m.* your gods!"... "He made weary his gods. He began to *m.* his gods' (KBo 3.16 rev. 9-10 & 13; Naram-Sin epic).

The verb *tariyanu-* is clearly the transitive 'to (make) weary' corresponding to *tarai-* 'exert oneself, become weary'. I therefore follow Gurney, *Hittite prayers* 49 note 3, in interpreting it in this context as 'to importune'. The translations 'implore' by (CHD L-N 320) and 'address' (Puhvel, *HED* 6, 178) are entirely ad hoc.

- (17) nu=za ^{muš}illuyankaš ^ṽIŠKUR tarahta ^ṽIŠKUR-aštašš=a DINGIR.MEŠ-naš hūma[nd]uš mūgait anda=m=apa tīyatten, 'The eel-snake conquered the Storm-god, and the Storm-god *m.*-ed all the gods: "Stand beside me!"' (KBo 3.7 i 11-13; Illuyanka Myth, OH/NS).

This is the only example of *mūgā(i)-* followed by direct speech!

- (18) [mān] ^ṽUTU=ŠI=ma ^uKA₅.E INA KUR ^{uru}Kašga pīyami nu=šši x[]-išši n=an=za ^utakšulaš [I]ē mugāši nu=šši kiššan lē teši māhhan=w[a]šarā ārti []x=wa=kan huwāi nu=wa EGIR-pa ammuk kattan [], 'If I, His Majesty, send a messenger into the Kaska land, do [not] to him, as a man at peace (with me) do not *m.* him and say to him as follows: "When you arrive up in [], flee and [come] back to me"' (KUB 23.77:65-67; Kaska-Treaty, MH/MS).

- (19) LÚ.M[EŠ k]uiēš ^{uru}Hattuši pitteantil[i uwant]eš n=aš EGIR-pa INA K[UR ^{uru}Kašga lē] mūkiškanz[i], 'The men who have come as fugitives to Hattusha, let them [not] *m.* them back to the Kaska land' (ibid. 73-74).

In lexical texts *mugāuwar* is equated to Akk. *šebū* 'to wish, desire', *suppū* 'to pray', and *tazzimtu*. As per Gurney, *Hittite prayers* 51, the last word also means 'wish, desire' (see also *CAD* sub *tazzimtu*). Contra Puhvel, *HED* 6, 184, there is no support whatever for *mugāuwar* meaning 'lament, complaint'.

The noun *mukeššar* is equivalent to *sISKUR* 'ritual' (see Laroche, *Prière hittite* 21 and *CHD* L-N 326). It is the object of the verbs *pai-* 'to give', *dai-* 'to place', *karp-* 'lift', *ašnu-* 'provide for', *šarā dā-* 'to pick up' and *parā pēda-* 'to carry off'. Note also in KUB 33.75 ii 8-9: *kā-ša=tta* [m]ukišni parhū[enaš] kittar[i] 'p. is hereby placed for you for *m.*'. See ibid. ii 12-13 for the same expression with 'fig'. Despite the equiv-

ocation of *CHD* L-N 324-326 and contra Puhvel, *HED* 6, 180, *mukeššar* clearly refers to concrete offerings, not to an 'invocation'. We must interpret the word with Laroche, *Prière hittite* 22, as 'le materiel qui sert de support au *mugawar*'.

Against the majority view the interpretation of *mūgā(i)-* as a verbum dicendi is impossible. A *mugāuwar* is a ritual action of which verbal evocation is only a part. This is proven by examples (7) and (8) above, where the key phrases are underscored. As per *CHD* L-N 261-262, the combination of particle, preverb and verb *-ašta/-kan anda mema-* refers exclusively to words spoken **concurrently** with a **non-verbal** action (literally 'to interject, insert words'). Since the dictionary entry offers only a couple of examples, I cite here further though by no means exhaustive evidence. The expression follows 'they place their hands on the rams' (KUB 9.32 i 22); 'I break (a list of various breads) for the Sun-god of Heaven' (KBo 15.25 Ro 35); 'they let (their offerings go) across to the male deities' (KBo 4.11:18); 'she digs up the ground... puts in copper, then fastens it down all around with nails and strikes (it) with a hammer' (KBo 4.1 Ro 7; likewise *ibid.* Ro 27 after placing multiple *kurakki*'s); 'I take the spindle and distaff away from him and give him a bow' (KUB 9.27 i 25); 'he pours (groats) from above onto the *mulati*-bread' (KBo 5.2 ii 21, with *-ašta*); 'he treats the deity with the *gangati*-plant...'; 'pours water from a small silver vessel' (KUB 29.7 Ro 10 and Vo 53; see *ibid.* Ro 30 and Vo 27.34.59); 'he carries them (various breads) to a cross-roads and crumbles them and libates beer' (KUB 17.12 ii 5; similar *ibid.* ii 11 and 25); 'he releases the boat into the river' (KUB 39.71 iv 16-17); 'also pour water on the hands of the servants' (KUB 39.88 iv 3-4).

It is important to contrast the usage found with a genuine verb of speech without *anda* 'into' and the particle (KBo 5.9 Vo 26, NH): *naš-ma=an apāšila ḫalziyatti nu kiššan mematt[i]* 'or (if) you yourself call him and speak as follows...'.⁷

As already argued by Gurney, *Hittite prayers* 45-48, the action of a *mugawar* is associated with only one very specific kind of "prayer". It is not applied to hymns of praise, or to the plague prayers⁷. It is also entirely distinct from vows (*malteššar*). As per Laroche, *Prière hittite* 24, the purpose of a *mugawar* is to compel a deity who has ceased his or her proper functions and retreated into inaction (often out of anger) to return and resume his or her beneficent role: 'de faire sortir la divinité de son hostilité,

⁷ These are defined as examples of *arkawar* 'plea, legal justification'. See Laroche, *Prière hittite* 13-20 and Melchert, "Hittite *arku-* 'chant, intone' vs. *arkawā(i)-* 'make a plea'", *JCS* 50 (1998) 45-47.

de sa retraite, de son inaction'. Thus the verb means fundamentally 'ébranler, émouvoir, remuer, mettre en branle': 'to rouse, bestir, urge to action'. See also the similar analysis by J. Glocker, with special reference to the *mukeššar/mugawar* for the Storm-god of Kuliwišna⁸. A *mugawar* is a ritual of inducement, using not only verbal evocations, but also every kind of tempting concrete offering available to entice the missing deity to return.

The sense 'to rouse, incite' also fits all of the non-ritual examples (16)-(19) above. In the Naram-Sin passage Ishtar urges Naram-Sin to importune or pester his gods (*tariyanut*, literally 'Make weary!') and to rouse them to action. The usually assumed obsequious meaning 'to implore, entreat' is quite incompatible with the paired 'pester, make weary'. Even more crucial are examples (18) and (19) from a treaty with the Kaskeans. It runs counter to everything that we know about this warlike, obdurate, and habitually uncooperative people as reported by the Hittites to suppose that they would adopt a pleading tone with a messenger sent by the Hittite king, much less with fugitives from their own land. The Hittite king's concern obviously is rather to prohibit the Kaskeans from **inducing** his own messenger to desert or the Kaskean fugitives to return to their country. While it is not expressly stated, it is very likely that the action of inducing the persons in question involved concrete rewards.

Given these quite unequivocal examples, we also need not assume that the Storm-god who was hard pressed by Illuyanka 'pleaded with' or 'implored' the other gods for help. A sense 'incited, urged (to action)' fits the context just as well. Direct speech in Hittite often follows verbs of action and provides no compelling evidence for a verb of speaking⁹. Hittite *mūgā(i)-* thus means 'to rouse, bestir, urge to action', as already determined by Laroche more than forty years ago.

Appendix

Hittite *mūgā(i)-* has been consistently derived from the PIE imitative root **mū(g/k)-* seen in Latin *mūgīre* 'to low, bellow, roar; rumble', Umbr. *mugatu*, *muieto* 'mutter, murmur', Grk. μύζω 'mutter, moan, murmur', μῦκόμεαι 'low, bellow', Germ. *muhen*, etc.¹⁰. The etymology is still defended by Puhvel, *HED* 6, 183-184 and Kloekhorst, *Etym. Dict.* 586, as well as Rieken, *StBoT* 44 (1999) 309. Even if Hitt. *mūgā(i)-* were a verbum di-

⁸ J. Glocker, *Das Ritual für den Wettergott von Kuliwišna* (Firenze 1997) 124-127.

⁹ For a representative list with references see H. A. Hoffner – H. C. Melchert, *A Grammar of the Hittite Language* (Winona Lake 2008) 355-356.

¹⁰ First by H. Zimmern in *Festschrift für W. Streitberg* (Leipzig 1924) 438.

cendi, the derivation is wildly implausible semantically (see already the correct rejection by Gurney, *Hittite prayers* 50). Puhvel claims a primary meaning 'to cry out' < 'speak loudly' for *mūgīre*, but the Latin verb does not describe a human utterance. The attempted comparison with (*im*)*plō-rāre* and *clāmāre* is totally illicit. In all cases where *mūgīre* is used of humans, the comparison with the sounds made by animals is present, often explicitly¹¹. Like all of its true cognates, Latin *mūgīre* is not a *verbum dicendi*, but a *verbum sonandi*. The derivation is also formally impossible. See Kloekhorst, *Etym. Dict.* 35-60, for compelling arguments that Hittite *u* spells /o/ and *ú* /u/. PIE **ǔ* appears as Hitt. *ú* before velar (cf. *i-ú-ga-an*, *ú-uk*). Thus *mu-u-ga-(a)-i-* cannot reflect **mūg-*.

Kloekhorst, *Hitt. Dict.* 568, tries to solve this problem by positing an ablauting root **meug-* 'to make a noise (in order to invoke the gods)', but the root is pure invention, since it patently is not the source of the imitative *mūgīre* 'to low, roar', etc. One does not invoke gods by bellowing, roaring, or lowing. As per Kloekhorst, *Etym. Dict.* 568, Rieken, *StBoT* 44, 309, and Puhvel, *HED* 6, 185, **mūg-* could be the source of Hittite ^{GIS}*mu(-ú-)kar/mu-uk-na-aš* (a noise-maker used inter alia to summon gods). It is hard to see, however, how an instrument made of wood would make the kind of low rumbling sound represented by **mūg-* (the usual assigned meaning is 'rattle; sistrum', suggesting a very different kind of sound). In any case the spelling with *ú* excludes any connection with *mu-u-ga-(a)-i-*. It is also worth pointing out that the wide variety of devices employed in the *mugawar* rituals never includes noise-makers to attract the gods.

In any case, as shown above, Hitt. *mūgā(i)-* is not a *verbum dicendi* or *sonandi*. Its source must be sought in the semantic area of 'to rouse, incite, urge'. The derivation by Laroche, *Prière hittite* 24, from an alleged **meug-* 'to move' (Lat. *mouēre*) cannot account for the other reflexes of that PIE root (which must actually be **m(y)euH-* or similar).

The formal derivation must be as outlined by Kloekhorst, *Etym. Dict.* 586: *mūgā(i)-* is a denominative verb from an action noun **mōug/k-o-* of a type well attested in Hittite (entirely parallel is *paršā(i)-* 'to crumble' < *parša-* 'crumb, morsel' < *parš-* 'to break (bread)'). For *mukeššar* beside *mūgā(i)-* one may compare *dannatteššar* 'desolation' beside *dannattā(i)-* 'devastate' < *dannatta-* 'empty'. Given the sense 'to incite, rouse', I suggest derivation from a root **meuk-* 'be pointed' seen in Lat. *mucrō* '(sword-)point' (with much less certainty in Grk. ἀμύσσω 'to tear, scratch, prick' and Lith. *mūšti* 'to strike'). For the semantic development we may

¹¹ One need only examine the citations in the *Thesaurus Linguae Latinae* and its accurate characterization: "inter verba ex imitatione vocum naturalium orta".

cite English 'to goad' < 'goad' (OE *gād* 'point of a weapon, goad' < Gmc. **gaidā*) or Latin *stimulāre* 'to goad; incite, urge, rouse' < *stimulus* 'goad'. Likewise then I assume **mók-o-* 'point' > 'pointed object, goad', whence *mūgā(i)-* 'to goad' > 'to incite, rouse, urge'.

Department of Linguistics
3125 Campbell Hall
P. O. Box 951543
UCLA
Los Angeles, CA 90095-1543