PUDENDA HETHITICA

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The title of this article is based on the happenstance that all the Hittite expressions discussed below involve either excretory functions and/or genitalia. I did not set out to write on such a specialized topic, but this common theme does lend a certain unity to the discussion which follows.

1. yayütæ katta-ya-an-za-kan tarnai

This collocation is attested in full in KUB 44 61 i 9 and incompletely in i 16. The same expression occurs in KBo 21 76:7 and 13 (with the order of clauses reversed). Burde,1 to whom we owe the edition of these “medical” texts, finds the expression obscure; she leaves yayütæ untranslated and renders the rest literally as “und lässt ihn herabhängen(?).”

I believe, however, that Burde herself has already provided all the necessary information for interpreting the phrase. The preceding context tells us that one of the patient’s symptoms is lack of appetite (or inability to eat), leading Burde to conclude correctly that the illness involves the gastro-intestinal tract. The prescription includes NU.LUḪḪA.SAR, “asafoetida,” and SUM.SAR, “garlic,” both of which according to Burde’s notes were used in ancient Mesopotamia for their diuretic effect. Finally, we know that the expression given above somehow indicates a cure, since the next paragraph begins: “But if he/she does not get well . . . ,” followed by further treatment.2

Given a gastro-intestinal ailment and the administering of well-known diuretics, it seems to me that the meaning of katta-ya-an-za-kan tarnai, “and he lets it go/releases it downward” is evident: we have here the Hittite expression for “passes” in the sense of “excretes.”3 Since the action is in a very real sense internal, the reflexive particle is perfectly in order. The reference of the animate anaphoric pronoun -an, “it,” is not clear, but there are several possibilities. The Hittite word for excrement known to us is

2. The negative formulation of KBo 21 76:6-8 leads to the same conclusion: n-an-za-kan mān kā-ta ḫuṭak UL tarnai yayū-t-eš-ta ḪḪA.SAR, “If he does not release it down at once, and does not yayūtæ at once . . .” This phrase is followed by further treatment.
3. As is well-established, Hittite katta, “down” is cognate with Greek kátá, “idem,” while Hittite tarnai, “release, let go,” matches Tocharian AB tārk-, “idem” (note A pres. 3rd sg. tārnā). Further connections of each are debatable.

137

JCS 35/3-4 1980
neuter (šakkar, šaknaš), but it is likely that others existed. Depending on the Hittites' conception of the matter, the -an could also refer to the illness, an obstruction, or perhaps even a "demon" causing the ailment: see KBo 6 34 iii 19f. (StBoT 22 12) and see Burde's discussion of the role of ḫbarā.4

As for yayaš, the fact that it occurs before katta . . . tarnai in one text and after it in another4 argues that the two actions expressed occurred together rather than one after the other. Formally, yayaš has the appearance of an imitative word, comparable to wāi, wiyanzī, "cries out" (also reduplicated wittawā). The latter is certainly related to the "noun" wāi-, "woe," which occurs in the rhyming pair ain wain (KBo 17 3 iv 26ff.). Both ai- and wai- are, of course, in origin exclamations indicating pain: uninflected ai is attested in KBo 21 19 rev. 2 and KUB 28 6 ii 16. I know of no *ya in Hittite, but compare i-i ḫalzīšaši, "cries ee-ee" in KBo 17 43 i 11. One may also compare the unclear KUB 30 34 iv 31-32: nu-tšan ṣarā nepšaš DING[JIR.MES-ša iyawa ḫalzaiš, "He cried i. up to the gods of heaven." I suggest that yayaši means no more than "cries yai," expressing pain. It is reasonable that a bowel movement under such circumstances (prolonged constipation) might be quite uncomfortable: the treatment is prescribed for up to seven days.

2. gullant(i)-GIS.ŠU.A-ka-

The use of purgatives is also attested in the Ritual of Ayatarsa (CTH 390), KUB 7 I i 1ff., which is prescribed for a child who is alpant-, "weak, torpid," or whose "innards are devoured" (garatēs adantes). The list of ingredients prescribed (i 19ff.) includes once again asafetida (here written as Akkadian tijat, scil. tijade). All the ingredients are crushed and mixed together, and beer is poured over them (i 25-28). If there is any doubt that the purpose of this concoction is purgative, it is removed by the prescribed mode of treatment: the liquid is administered both orally and anally, as well as poured over the child, who is also ritually washed (i 29-34). Following this, an ointment is prepared, and the child's limbs are rubbed with it (i 37-38). This is followed by ašāšši-ma-tšan gullantī GIS.ŠU.Â, "she places him (the child) on a g.-chair" (i 40-41). There is then mention of a container full of ritually pure water (wašešnaš wētar), and the tablet unfortunately breaks off.

The adjective g. occurs in context, KBo 10 37 I 22 and iii 18, 29 (and the parallel KBo 13 156 v 7-8), where it refers to a type of bread:

5. See n. 2 above.

NINDA.KUR,RA gullantī-. As noted by Hoffner,6 Hittite bread names may refer to the ingredients, the intended use, the color, or especially the shape. The first two possibilities are eliminated by the use with "chair." Color is a possibility, but it is not easy to see why the color of the chair would be relevant to its use in the ritual.

On the other hand, after the administration of a purgative, it is reasonable that the child would be placed not on a chair of ordinary shape, but on a "hollow" chair, one with a hole in it, to wit, a toilet. Furthermore, we know that the Hittites had discovered the sandwich or layer-cake (see the "formule des pains" in the Hittite-Palaic Zarpw F ritual, CTH 751). It would therefore not surprise us to learn that they had also invented the doughnut (or perhaps rather ring-cake, there being more than one way to make bread with a hole in the middle). I suggest then that gullant(i)- means "hollow, with a hole in it." The hapax gulliya in KUB 27 67 iv 32 is probably related: INA KUR LŪ.K[ŪR] x gulliya nanni, "drive into the enemy land into the/a g." The context suggests a meaning such as "pit" or "ravine," basically a "hole."7

3. kiklu- and paštarī-

In KUB 44 61 rev. 24-25, the same text discussed in Section 1 above, we find the expression n-aš mān (UL) paštarī-. Burde8 argues convincingly from the context that the meaning is "If he is (not) circumcised . . ." She believes paštarī-, "circumcised" to be hapax, but the word does occur elsewhere in Hittite, in a very different context.

7. The form gullant(n) (KBo 10 37 iii 18) requires a stem gullanti-. The dat.-loc. sg. gullant(n) in KUB 7 I i 40 may reflect either gullant- or gullantri-. The I-stem is certainly secondary (an old I-stem built on a base in -ant- would have produced assimilation: *-ant-t > *-antz-). The stem gullant- could be either a participle or an ant- extension of an unattested adjective *gulj-.
In RS 25.421 rev. 22, a Hittite translation of an Akkadian text termed a "signalement lyrique" by Laroche (CTH 315), we find Hittite klikubasāri[b-m]-a-t, "She is an iron-ring," equating with Akkadian unqi parzallt. Laroche\(^9\) compares klikubasāri to the hapax kliklimaimenzi in the inventory KUB 12 1 iv 26 (see DIL 55), which he proposes to read kliklaimenzi, "iron-coated" or the like, participle to a verb *kliklibāi, "plate/coat with iron."\(^{10}\)

It is clear, however, that klikubasāri, "iron-ring" must be divided as kliklu, "iron," plus bašāri, "circumcised." For the relationship of the two uses compare in the same semantic sphere Hittite pišna- < *pesna-, originally "penis," but then by pars pro toto "the one having a penis" = "male, man." In the same way, then, pašāri, "circle, ring" is used for "the one having a ring, circle" (around his penis) = "circumcised." The -ba of kliklaimenzi (presumably for *kliklimaimenzi)\(^12\) must therefore have another explanation. An adjective *kliklu-, "of iron," as the base for the denominative verb *kliklibāi is certainly conceivable, but


10. H. G. Gittenboeck has kindly informed me that collation has confirmed the reading with BA: kliklaimenzi.

11. The noun pašāri, "circle, ring" (animate) formally recalls aušri, "watchtower" to the verb au-,-see. Since the latter also occurs as aušri, one could read pašāri as /pas-ari/- on the other hand, with only two occurrences one could also read it as /pas-ri/-/. For the spelling compare ki-bi-li-ri beside ki-bi-ri for /gisir/, "in the hand," and many others. As for the base *paš-, one source of nominative -š- in Hittite is a sequence *as- or *s-h/-p. However, I know of no Proto-Indo-European root of a shape *Pen-s- or *Peh-s/š-s, from which one could derive a meaning "ring," "circle." Since Proto-Indo-European *s also appears as -š- in Hittite before a sonant (compare the example kliklu cited above), one could also derive /pas-ri/- from a simple root *Pš- or *Pas-. Again, however, I know of no likely etymon for "circle, ring."

There are cases of sporadic -š- in Hittite from clusters other than those given above. The noun araktur, "stream, current," which is a reduplicated stem from the verb ar-, "flow," also appears as araktur. (KUB 36.55 ii 20), probably also as araktur. in KBo 12 33 iii 3. Since -šs normally remains in Hittite, the appearance of -š- for -rs- in this word is undoubtedly related to the presence of two other šs. This is also possible for pašāri-, where paš(a)-rii for /pas-ari/- could be due to the second š. This permits a derivation from Proto-Indo-European *bher-s-, "cut, scratch;" compare Old Irish bhreas, "shear, cut" (especially the hair), Greek phdros, "piece." A similar root-extension appears in Hittite karkš-*, "cut" < *ker-s-. For the sense "circle" from "scratch, cut" compare German Kreis, "circle," which is related to Middle High German kritzen, "draw a circle" and also Middle High German kritzen, "scratch, scribble," and Old High German krittizōn, "idem." Grimm, Deutsches Wb sub kreis, explains the semantic development from the fact that originally many circles were engraved or scratched onto a surface. The use of Hittite pašāri, "circle" for "circumcised" would thus accord well with a derivation from *bher-s-.

12. The apparent alternation a/i in kliklu-/kliklibāi is unusual, but not unique; see tšāru/i/tšārāš.

I know of no other examples of an adjective suffix -ba- in Anatolian, while verbs in -māt(ī)- from bases in -u- are well attested; see Luvian šašumāt, "t," and Hittite enu-māt, "make warm," ešhumu-māt, "make bloody."\(^13\) Given the very close resemblance of the signs BA and MA, I suspect that the hapax kliklaimenzi is for *kliklimaimenzi and that the verb "plate with iron" is *kliklimāt-/*klikkumāt-.

The word for "iron" is normally written in Hittite with the Sumerogram AN.BAR. The only examples with phonetic complements known to me are the genitive AN.BAR-a and the instrumental AN.BAR-it. These argue neither for nor against the apparent equation kliklu = parzillu = AN.BAR.\(^14\)

4. TŪG.šeknu- (śara) pippa-

The literal meaning of this phrase has long been tentatively known: "turn up one's robe." However, the real significance of this expression in the contexts in which it appears has remained obscure. Friedrich\(^15\) translates śara pippa-as "(ein abwärts hängendes Kleid) hochstülpen(?)." However, on the following page he renders the separately-listed šeknu pippuwar as "Rock-Umwendung(?)", and translates the phrase MAMETUM šeknu pippuwar (KUB 26 1 iv 46) freely as "Eid brechen." Von Schuler\(^16\) retains Friedrich's literal interpretation, but prefers to translate the passage as "diesen Eid verdreht." Otten\(^17\) interprets KUB 7 41 rev. 13 (//KBo 10 45 12-3) TŪG.šeknu-šan kēdaš parnaš śara pippaš as "und [hat] nun seinem Mantel über dieses Hauswesen geworfen."

13. The suffix is originally -u(i)-, as seen in hūsuš(i)-, "lie open, be exposed," to the root baš-/-biš- "open." By a regular Hittite sound change *uš(i)- > um(i)-.

14. For a technological term such as "iron," borrowing is a likely source, but the Hittite word does not resemble the pan-Semitic word reflected in Akkadian parzillu, nor any other term for "iron" in geographically close languages. We may therefore consider the possibility that the word has a Proto-Indo-European etymology. Many Indo-European terms for metals are based on color: for example Greek argiros, "silver" < *hér-, "white" (compare Hittite ḫerti-, "white"), likewise "gold" < *ghel-, "yellow" (compare Sanskrit harti, "yellow"), and Lithuanian alvas, "tin" < *al-wo-, "white" (compare Latin albus, "white," and specifically placēnum album, "white lead" = "tin"). Hittite kliklu may also be compared formally to other Proto-Indo-European color terms. Compare ba+tēr/ki-bar- < *bher, "brown," which is the source of Sanskrit bahūri- (kind of ochre) and the European word for "beaver." We may analyze Hittite kliklu-likewise as *ke/ti-k-i- u-; "the gray (metal)") < *kel-, "gray, blackish"; compare Greek kek-alōs, "black," kōlōs, "gray," and so on.

15. Hwb sub pippa.
16. Dionysiust św. 16.
Modern Europeans and Americans generally content themselves with symbolizing self-exposure by various well-known hand gestures, but the purpose is the same: a serious insult or curse.22
Some support for the idea that the Hittites wore nothing under the šeknu- comes from the peculiar ritual passage KUB 20 90 iv 15-16: aššāar arta TŪG šeknu- peššiyanzī wappianzi, "the assembly stands; they throw off their robes and bark." If the participants are to bark like dogs (for whatever purpose), it is reasonable that the purpose of removing their robes is to make them naked like animals.23
A passage in the Old Hittite "Palace Chronicle" leads to the same conclusion. In KBo 3 34 i 15ff., two men Nunnu and Saramsu are punished by being yoked like oxen, but in i 19ff. the king must be convinced that the punishment was severe enough: mān luktat nu ABI LUGAL ḫalzāiš kūš aššāar kuš peššetet TŪG-SUNU TŪG šēšial-šemett-aa kuit natta eššakantā UMMA LŪ. MES MESEDI šeknu- šmet anda nēan nu TŪG. HI A-us aššāar nār nēnu eššar LUGAL-usl(!) awṣa[i], "When dawn came, the father of the king called the one who had taken them (the culprits) away: 'Why are their robes and belts not blood-streaked?' The mešedi said: 'Their robes are turned in.' They opened/turned out (their) robes, and the king saw the blood.' It makes little sense that anda nēan would mean "turned inside out." I assume rather that it means that the loose robe (probably open in front) was drawn together (perhaps even overlapped) and tied with a belt or sash. It seems highly likely that when the two men were harnessed like oxen they were stripped naked. There was some bleeding either from whippings or simply the chafing of the harness, but not enough, apparently, to soak through their robes when they put them back on. Therefore the officials had to open the men's robes to show the king the blood on their bodies. This again implies near or total nudity.

The usage of šeknu- thus supports the proposal that nothing was worn under it, which in turn explains the meaning of the phrase šeknu- (ṣarā) pippa-, "turn up the robe" = "expose oneself."

There is another apparently peculiar expression with šeknu- attested in the oracle text KBo 2 6 i 39-40 (and see also iii 49-50): DINGIR.LUM-naš ANA INIM 4-SIN-4 U šer TŪG šeknu- EŞGI-PA UL SUĐ-yasši nu IGI-ziš

Exposure of the buttocks has, of course, a similar function. Since the Hittite texts do not mention turning around, I find this less likely, but it cannot be excluded that the Hittite expression equates with "moaning" rather than "flashing."

22. The action is often accompanied by the appropriate verbal phrase, making the meaning crystal-clear. It is likely that the Hittite act of turning up the robe is functionally equivalent to vulgar English "F--k you!"

23. We know from KUB 2 3 ii 14ff. that nudity did play a part in some Hittite rituals.
MUŠEN.ḪURRI SIG₂-tu EGIR-ma NU.SIG₂-du, "(If) you the god do not pull back(?!) your robe at us over the matter of Armana-U then let the first ẖ-bird be favorable, but let the second be unfavorable."

It is clear that the action described expresses anger or displeasure. As usual, the god is being systematically asked for the cause of his wrath. It is hard to see, however, how “pulling back” the robe signifies anger. I believe the answer lies in two passages which I have discussed elsewhere. The first of these is §171 of the Laws, where a mother turns her dress around in the face of her son, symbolizing rejection of him. Here the expression used is TŪC-SU erti nārī, “turns her dress from there,” that is, “from its accustomed place.” In KUB 33 67 1 26-31 the goddesses Anzili and Zakki symbolize their anger by putting on various pieces of clothing backward; they put the left shoe on the right foot and vice-versa; fasten the breast ornaments in back; and reverse the front and back ḫuṣiḫ-garments. The meaning of ṣeknu- ănu ḫuṣiḫiya- must be similar: not “pull back” but “pull (around) to the back” so that the front is in back and vice-versa. Again, anger is symbolized by destroying the natural order of things in the form of dress.

I conclude this discussion of ṣeknu- with some formal considerations. Friedrich lists ṣeknu- as both neuter and animate, but in fact it is consistently animate: the accusative singular is always ṣeknu-, and the accusative plural ṣeknu. The nominative singular ṣeknu- is probably attested in KUB 36 39 ii 5 and 7, and in 33 122 21 21. The only form which appears to be neuter is ṣeknu-ṣam in the Palace Chronicle, but this instance may easily be explained as a collective plural: compare English “clothing” or “robes” as in “his judicial robes.”

Like any animate noun, it may have a collective plural as well as an individualized plural (compare alpa and alpa, “clouds”). The same applies to ṣeknu-. From ṣeknu, Watkins LG 45 (1969) 239, likewise deduces a collective plural *ṭaṭpa, “clothing,” to animate ṣaṭpa-, “garment.”

31. Götter apud Laroche, RHA 23 (1965) 136, reads the sequence as TŪC-an-ḥa-še-a- ṣak-an, which is syntactically impossible. Neither the accusative TŪC-an, the enclitic -i, nor the particle -še fits the context. The -aḥ after -aḥ is clear in the autograph, and a dative-locative is needed. The fact that correct Hittite word order is preserved behind a Sumerogram (TŪC.DINR.LIM-va-u = šiṭšu ṣeknauwaš) is confirmed by DUMU.LU.UL.U.LU- in KBO 12 8 27 for ṭanduḫišiḫ DUMU-U. Compare also Ṣ.DINR.LIM = šiṭšu pṭt.

32. Cor.Ling. 50-51.


34. Hittite pītta, “overtum” (by bringing the bottom of something upward) has been plausibly related to Sanskrit ud pītta, “rises up,” by Hoffmann apud Oettinger, Die Stammbildung des hehitischen Verbums (1979) p. 498.

The etymology of ṣeknu- remains unclear. For such a cultural object borrowing is always likely, but it is hard to see why a foreign word for an object (thus a noun) would have taken on the peculiar Hittite inflection of ṣaṭpa- or ṣeknu-. On the other hand, that an original adjective used as a substantive would take on the more regular noun inflection is to be expected. For a word indicating a garment (that is, a large piece of cloth), derivation from the root *sek-, “cut,” would be plausible; compare English “shirt” and “skirt,” both ultimately from *sk-er-; “cut.” However, examples of adjectives in *na- in other Indo-European languages are generally active in sense; see Wackernagel-Debrunner, Althindische Grammatik II 2.741 with references. It is uncertain whether the isolated *stu₂-h₂-na₁, “son” < *(the one) born to *sekhu₂, “give birth,” may be used as support for a *sek-nu₂, “(that which is) cut” > “piece of cloth” > “robe.”