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'GOD-DRINKING': A SYNTACTIC TRANSFORMATION IN HITTITE

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New evidence confirms that the Hittite ritual expression 'drink the god X' means simply 'drink to (the honor of) the god X'. The underlying indirect object (divine name) is made the surface direct object by an optional syntactic transformation of Hittite which also applies to other structures in ritual contexts. Comparative evidence suggests, though it cannot prove, that a form of this rule existed in PIE.

Hittite ritual language shows many sentences of the following type (KUB X 69 iv 2-3) (1):

- 1) [LUGAL SA] L.LUGAL TUŠ-aš dŠimešun akuwanzi
'The king (and) queen, seated, drink Simesu.'

The meaning of the expression 'drink a god' has been the subject of debate throughout the history of Hittite studies. Early researchers, faced with sentences like 1), concluded that the verb *eku-* could mean 'give to drink' as well as 'drink' (see e.g. Hrozny 1917:85 note 2). Friedrich (1940:210 note 2) denied this and later compared the expression 'drink a god' to the Christian eucharist (1952:40).

Puhvel (1957:31-33) argued against any eucharistic connotation. He equated the above sentence-type where the god is the direct object to other examples where the god's name stands in the dative. In both cases, the meaning would be 'drink to (the honor of) the god X'. For a transitive verb in this usage he compared English 'toast'.

Otten (1958:132) reasserted the meaning 'give to drink' for *eku-*, based on passages in the royal funeral rites which will be examined below. Kammenhuber (1961:308-309) concluded that the horse-training texts contribute nothing to the solution of the problem, since in those texts *eku-* means consistently 'drink', not 'give to drink' (the two exceptions being clearly aberrant). Friedrich (1961:9), citing Kammenhuber (1) as well as Otten, readmitted the meaning 'give to drink' for *eku-*.

(1) For the abbreviations used in citing Hittite texts see Friedrich 1952.

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Carter (1962:449) criticized this step as not fully supported by the evidence. Pointing out for the first time that the verb *šipant-* 'libate; sacrifice' likewise takes either the accusative or dative of the receiving god, Carter cautiously supported Puhvel's view that both structures with *eku-* mean 'drink to (the honor of)'.

Crucial support for Puhvel's interpretation was presented by Carruba (1967:40-41) apropos of the following passage (KBo XV rev. 15-17):

2) *nu hantezzi paši dUTU ŠAMÊ ekuzi EGIR-ŠU-ma ANA dIŠKUR ekuzi EGIR-ŠU-ma ANA dLAMA ekuzi*

'He (the celebrant) first drinks (to) the Sun-god of heaven; then he drinks to the Storm-god; then he drinks to the Guardian-god.'

The sequence of adverbs 'first' . . . 'then' . . . 'then' argues that the three sentences are fully parallel in content and thus that 'drink a god' means exactly the same as 'drink to a god'.

As further proof that it is the human celebrant doing the drinking and not the god, Carruba offered the following example (KUB XVII 24 iii 22f):

3) *nu ANA SAL-ahuirra EN.SISKUR-ya NAG-na pianzi nu dUTU-un TUŠ-aš akuwanzi*

'They give the a-priestess and the master of the sacrifice (something) to drink, and they, seated, drink (to) the Sun-god.' This passage clearly excludes 'give to drink' for the structure: divine name (acc.) + *eku-*.

Despite Carruba's presentation, the debate over the real meaning of 'drink a god' continued. Kammenhuber (1971: 152-153) asserted that 'god-drinking' was a special case of libation originally reserved for the Hittite king alone and imbued with deep magical implications. (2) Rosenkranz (1973: 288) denied the equivalence of 'drink a god' and 'drink to a god' and also speculated on the 'geistigen Hintergrund' of the concept of 'god-drinking' (1973:283). Kammenhuber (1977:17-18), after citing the previous literature, merely repeated her assertion of (1971) that the special concept of 'god-drinking' by the Hittite king originated in the old Hattic-Hittite layer of

(2) Kammenhuber's claim that 'god-drinking' by the king consisted chiefly in a libation must be rejected. The texts as a whole show clearly that the action (*ta*) *huppari šipanti* 'He libates into a bowl' is in addition to the act of drinking.

rituals and was subject to 'reinterpretations' and 'contaminations' in later Hittite. She made no attempt to refute the arguments of Carruba and others, and the near-exhaustive survey of attestations which followed, organized according to 'cult layers', brought more confusion than clarity to the problem.

Kammenhuber's treatment brought forth a sharp critique from Eichner (1978:66), who recalled once more the equivalence of the dative and accusative of the receiving god with *šipand-*. He proposed the same 'Nullderivation' for *eku-*: 'einem Gott zu Ehren trinken' and 'einen Gott durch Trinken ehren', following Puhvel and Carruba.

It seems fair to say that the interpretation of 'drink a god' in Hittite is still in dispute. The purpose of the following remarks is to reconfirm once and for all that 'drink the god x' means simply 'drink to (the honor of) the god x' as claimed by Puhvel, Carruba and others. The demonstration will include the presentation of new evidence and an explicit account of the relationship between the various equivalent syntactic structures involved.

Several Hittite rituals include remarkable provisions of the following type (IBOT III 52, 3-5):

4) *t-an LUAZU IŠTU MUŠEN HARRI NA4hušit wetenazzi-ya wahnuzi*

'The physician "whirls" him (the king) with the h. bird, with hušt- and with water.'

The meaning of this peculiar sentence is made clear by examples like 5) and 6):

5) *MUŠEN haranan ERÍN.MEŠ-ann-a LUGAL-aš SAL.LUGAL-aš-a šer-šemmet wahnumeni* (KBo XVII 1 ii 20-21)

'We whirl the eagle and (the figurines of) the troops over the king and queen.'

6) *nu-šmaš-kan ŠAH-TUR šer arha wahnuzi* (KBo II 3 ii 3)

'She (the priestess) whirls the piglet over them.'

Here there can be no question of a literal or mystical meaning for 'whirl the king'. The content of sentence 4) is entirely parallel to that of 5) and 6): the celebrant of the ritual whirls (lit. 'turns') various objects over the heads of the sacrificers.(3)

(3) Occasionally, the act of 'whirling' may also be performed on (the image of) a god (KBo XXIII 1 ii 2-3): *nu DINGIR LAM IŠTU AMUSEN SUR.DU.AMUSEN SIL]A MAS.TUR MUŠEN HARRI NA4hušit wahnuwanzi* 'They "whirl" the god with an eagle, a hawk, a lamb, a kid, a h-bird and hušt.'

In the underlying structure of these sentences, the ritual object is the direct recipient, and the sacrificer the indirect recipient, of the action of the verb 'whirl'. Normally this relationship is expressed in Hittite by the accusative of the ritual object and the dative (in Old Hittite optionally the genitive) of the sacrificer plus the complex verb *šer arha waḥnu-*. However, by an optional syntactic transformation of Hittite, the same underlying structure may be realized as a surface structure with the accusative of the sacrificer and the instrumental of the ritual object. This relationship may be schematically represented as 7):

7a) Object (acc.) + Person (dat./gen.) + *šer arha waḥnu* ⇒

7b) Person (acc.) + Object (inst.) + (*arha*) *waḥnu-*

As part of the transformation the preverb *ser* is obligatorily, and the preverb *arha* optionally, deleted.

The syntax of *eku-* and *šipand-* in ritual contexts is parallel to that of *šer arha waḥnu-*, where the secondary status of 7b) vis-à-vis 7a) is clear. The parallelism is merely obscured by the fact that with the first two verbs one or more elements of the total structure is usually deleted on the surface. The basic structure with *eku-* and *šipand-* may be represented as 8) (4):

8a) Liquid (acc.) + god's name (dat.) + vessel (inst.) + *eku-/šipand-*

The full structure is rare, but it is attested (KUB II 13 i 43-44):

9) GEŠTIN-*ann-a* *tapišānit* GIR₄ *kēdaš* DINGIR-MEŠ-*aš šipanti*

'And he libates wine for these gods with a t. of burnt clay.'

Usually either the liquid, vessel or both are deleted:

10) *maḥhan* LUSANGA IŠTU GAL ANA DINGIRLIM *šipanti* (KBo XIII 164 iv 12)

'When the priest libates to the god with a cup.'

Example 10) illustrates deletion of the liquid, while the sentences in example 2) above with *eku-* and the god's name in the dative result from deletion of both liquid and vessel. (5)

The structure of 8a) may optionally be transformed into

(4) The schema of (8a) does not, of course, exhaust the possible constructions of *šipant-*. See further below.

(5) The frequent surface deletion of the liquid and vessel is made possible by the fact that the liquid is almost always wine, while the vessel is usually inferrable from the context. For similar reasons, a majority of the examples of *špēndēin* in Homer also do not specify either liquid or vessel.

that of 8b):

8b) god's name (acc.) + liquid (inst.) + vessel (inst.) + *eku-/šipand-*

Again the full structure is rare, but it does occur (KBo XX 64 obv. 7) (6):

11) [dUTU/dIŠKUR] ŠAMĒ *šipanduit* KUBABBAR GEŠ-TIN-*it šipanti*

'He libates (to) the Sun-god/Storm-god of heaven with wine with a silver libation vessel.'

This structure is also more common with deletion of liquid, vessel, or both:

12) EGIR-SU-*ma* dUTU-*un* GUB-*aš* 3-ŠU SI-*it akuwanzi* (KBo II 14 iii 10-11)

'Then standing they drink (to) the Sun-god three times with a horn.'

The first sentence of example 2) above with the Sun-god as direct object results from the deletion of both liquid and vessel in a transformed structure of this type.

The behavior of the three verbs *eku-*, *šipand-* and *ser arha waḥnu-* is thus the same, and we may set up a single optional transformation of the following form (7):

13a) NP₁ (acc.) + NP₂ (dat.) + [NP₃ (inst.)] + *eku-/šipand-/š.a. waḥnu-* ⇒

13b) NP₂ (acc.) + NP₁ (inst.) + [NP₃ (inst.)] + *eku-/šipand-/a. waḥnu-*

We are now in a position to reevaluate the passages in the funeral rites which led Otten to a meaning 'give to drink' for *eku-* + acc.:

KUB XXX 19+ i 45-47

14) EGIR-*anda-ma* *apel* ZI 3-ŠU *ekuzi* . . . *maḥhan-ma-šši* INA 3 KASKALNI ANA ZI-ŠU *akuwan*<na> *pianzi*

KUB XXXIX 15: 7-8

15) EGIR-ŠU-*ma* *akkandaš* ZI-*ni* 3-ŠU *ekuzi* *maḥh[an. . .]* *apel* ZI-*an* *ekuzi*

Otten (1958:132) assumes that the regular construction is *eku-* + acc. and that this equates to *akuwanna pāi-*, i.e. 'give to drink'.

(6) In the context, restoration of a divine name before the epithet ŠAMĒ 'of heaven' is assured.

(7) The NP₃ is bracketed as optional, since a third NP does not occur with *šer arha waḥnu-*.

He must then regard the type of *ZI-ni ekuzi* as a 'contamination' of the two. Accordingly, he translates 14) as: 'Hinterher aber trinkt er dreimal seine Seele . . . wenn sie aber ihm, <nämlich> seiner Seele, zum dritten Male zu trinken geben . . .'. Note that Otten must interpret the dative pronoun *-ssi* of the second sentence as proleptic: 'to him, i.e. to his soul'. Such a construction is not unknown in Hittite, but it is certainly the lectio difficilior. As we have seen (ex. 3 above), all unambiguous cases show that it is the human celebrant who does the drinking. A more natural interpretation of 14) would therefore be: 'Then he drinks (to) his soul three times . . . but when they give him (the celebrant) (something) to drink to his soul for the third time . . .'. The parallel EGIR-*anda* . . . *mahhan* suggests that 15) is to be restored after 14), thus reaffirming the equivalence of the dative and accusative constructions with *eku-*: 'Then he drinks to the soul of the dead three times, [but] when he drinks (to) his soul [for the third time] . . .'

Our transformation 13) thus accounts for the synchronic facts about Hittite *eku-* and shows that the surface structure 'drink a god' has no more special or mystical significance than 'whirl the king/god', both being mere syntactic variants of structures with 'god' and 'king' as indirect objects.

There remains the question of the historical source of this syntactic rule. There are no parallels outside Hittite for such usage with 'drink' or 'whirl', but the behavior of *šipand-* 'libate', more generally 'sacrifice', recalls that of similar verbs in other Indo-European languages. Before turning to the comparative evidence, we must first sort out the various usages of *šipant-* in Hittite itself. The following treatment is based on the invaluable survey of Goetze (1971).

First of all, *šipand-* in its meaning 'libate' may enter into the structure (13a) given above, with the liquid as direct object, the receiving god as indirect object and the vessel used in the instrumental. As already pointed out, in most cases one or more of the nominal complements are deleted on the surface. *šipant-* 'libate' may take a further nominal complement in the locative expressing the goal of the action, i.e. where the liquid is poured. Note the frequent ritual phrase (*ta*) *huppari šipanti* 'He libates into a bowl'. Theoretically, the complement in the locative could cooccur with the other nominal complements of (13a), but I know of no actual occurrence.

In PIE many verbs, including those of the semantic sphere of 'pour', could appear in two constructions: (a) liquid (acc.) + goal (loc.) or (b) liquid (inst.) + goal (acc.). Our translation of the verb as 'pour' in the first instance and 'fill' in the second is a function of the modern languages. In PIE the verb is the same (see Haudry 1977:233ff). In contemporary terms, we may say that (b) is derived from the underlying structure of (a) by an optional transformation. (8)

In the case of Hittite *šipant-*, this transformation applied (apparently obligatorily) when the goal of the action was a sacrificial animal. Thus we find not: liquid (acc.) + animal (loc.), but rather: animal (acc.) + liquid (inst.).

16) *n-ašta SALŠ* [U.GI . . .] *tapiruš* MUŠEN 1 UDU-*ya ANA* DINGIR.MEŠ [*karu*] *išyaš İSTU* GEŠTIN *šipanti* (KUB VII 4, 8ff)

'The "old woman" libates [], t.-birds and a sheep with wine for the ancient gods.'

This is not the end of the development. As Goetze's examples make clear, *šipant-* in Hittite came to refer not just to the act of consecrating an animal (by libation), but also to the entire act of sacrificing.

Now virtually any PIE verb may take an 'internal' accusative, where the nominal object repeats the semantic content of the verb: cf. Grk. *spéndein spondén* 'make a libation'. The nominal object may be an actual derivative of the verb (the figura etymologica) or merely a noun whose meaning is closely related to that of the verb (Eng. 'run a race'). Thus, once *šipant-* in Hittite came to mean 'sacrifice', it could take as a direct object the noun 'sacrifice': *aniur* (= SISKUR.SISKUR). As the means by which the sacrifice is accomplished, either the liquid or animal offering may appear in the instrumental (KUB XXIX 4 iii 56):

17) *nu SISKUR zurkiyaš İSTU MÄS.TUR šipandanzi*

'They perform the sacrifice of z. with a kid.'

Since it is predictable from the verb, the internal accusative 'sacrifice' may be deleted, producing the type of KBo V 1 iii 3-4:

18) *nu addaš DINGIR.MEŠ-aš zēyanitit İ-it šipandanzi*

'They sacrifice to the father-gods (manes?) with cooked fat.'

(8) It is immaterial for the present analysis if one prefers to derive (a) from (b) synchronically. Historically, it is likely that the use of the accusative to express the goal is older than its use to mark the direct object.

This type of construction is common with several Vedic verbs in the field of 'sacrifice': e.g. *vidh-*, *dās-* (see Haudry 1977:352ff). It is rare, but attested, in Greek: Od. m 363 *al' húdati spén-dontes* 'but libating with water . . .'; Herodotus I 216 *tēi hēlōi thūousi hūppōisi* 'they sacrifice to the sun with horses' (vs. variant *hūppous*).

None of the above, of course, yet accounts for the type 13b) with the god as direct object. The explanation for 13b) lies in the fact that in PIE two classes of verbs occurred in similar ritual contexts, each with their own typical syntactic structure: 19a) god (acc.) + object (inst.) + 'venerate', 'revere', 'honor' 19b) god (dat.) + object (acc.) + 'give', 'offer', 'present' I have intentionally avoided 'worship' and 'sacrifice' in the list of verbs, because it is precisely this which we cannot reconstruct for PIE: a single common lexeme for the total act of 'worship'/'sacrifice'. (9)

Nevertheless, the existence of both types (19a and 19b) in PIE is assured, and evidence from Vedic, Latin, Germanic and Slavic shows that the two constructions mutually influenced one another. More precisely, verbs of either class came to occur in either construction, or again in transformational-generative terms, the underlying structure of 19a) could optionally be transformed into that of 19b), and vice-versa. The relevant material has been collected by Haudry (1977:342-367).

Thus in Vedic with *saparya-* we find both *tā asya nāmasā sāhah saparyānti* 'They honor his strength with obeisance' (RV 1,84,12) and *idāṃ divē nāmah pṛthivyāi saparyāmi* 'I offer this obeisance to heaven (and) earth' (RV 3,54,3). Likewise *dās-* takes both constructions: *yás túbhryam . . . nāmo . . . dāsāt* 'Whoever offers you obeisance . . .' (RV 1, 71, 6) and *kathā dāsēma nāmasā súdānūn . . . marúto* 'How shall we honor the bountiful Maruts with obeisance . . .' (RV 5, 41, 16). The usual Vedic syntax with *vidh-* is that of (18) above, but there are also examples like RV 3,3,1: *vāisvānarāya . . . rātñā vidhanta* 'They offer V. pearls . . .'. Once there is also attested: *súṣman ta enā havīṣā vidhema* 'We wish to honor your clan with this

(9) Hamp (1973) makes a good case for a compound of **bher-* 'carry' as the PIE expression for 'offer' a sacrificial animal or meat. But the animal offering was only part of the total act of 'sacrifice', which included libation, verbal praise and other components.

oblation' (RV 8, 96, 8).

Other Indo-European languages show the same phenomenon: cf. Latin *mactāre deum uictimā* 'magnify/worship a god with a sacrifice' and *mactāre uictimam deō* 'offer a sacrifice to a god'. Both constructions are also attested with reflexes of Germanic **blōtan*: Gothic *fastubnjam jah bidom blotande fraujan* 'honoring the Lord with fasting and prayer' (Luke 2, 37) versus Old English *beorn blotan feondum* 'sacrifice children to demons'. Finally, there is OCS *žrati*, which is attested in the meaning 'sacrifice' with the offering in the accusative. Other reflexes of PIE **g^werh₂-* such as Skt. *gr̥hātī* and Lith. *gr̥ti* show that the original meaning was that of 'praise' or the like, with the god as the direct object.

The semantics of the roots **megh₂-* 'great' > 'magnify' and **g^werh₂-* 'sing, praise' make it certain that these verbs were of the type (19a). Thieme's etymology of Vedic *vidh-* (< **vi+* + *dheh₁-*), confirmed by Hoffman 1969, assures that it belonged originally to type (19b). Other cases are less clear. We may be sure, however, that verbs of either class came to occur in either surface structure 19a) or 19b).

We come finally to the age of this phenomenon. In the absence of any specific correspondences, i.e. examples of the same lexical item participating in both constructions in more than one Indo-European language, we cannot with assurance attribute the optional transformation of 19a) and 19b) to PIE. The facts cited may be due to independent but parallel developments in the individual languages. However, we can assert with confidence that the Hittite transformation of 13) originally applied to *šipand-* 'libate; sacrifice' and was then extended to the other ritual expressions with *eku-* 'drink' and *šer arha wahnu-* 'whirl (over)'. Furthermore, at least the origins of this development lay already in the ritual language of PIE.

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