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FATE STRIKES BACK: NEW EVIDENCE FOR THE IDENTIFICATION OF THE HITTITE FATE DEITIES AND ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR HIEROGLYPHIC WRITING IN ANATOLIA

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Abstract

In 2014, I proposed that the GUL-šeš deities may have to be identified with the *Kuwa(n)šeš* deities, a suggestion that has met with severe criticisms. Since now new evidence has come to light that confirms the equation of these deities, it seems opportune to re-address this debate, which also has important consequences for the use of hieroglyphic writing in Anatolia. In this article, I will present the new evidence, counter the critiques that have been given, and address the wider implications.

1. Introduction

In an earlier article (Waal 2014), I suggested that the *Kuwa(n)šeš* deities were the phonetic reading of the GUL-šeš deities, a proposal that was heavily criticized (Archi 2013; Yakubovich 2014; Melchert 2016). At that time, this idea had to remain a suggestion, since the evidence was mostly indirect, and duplicates or parallel texts that could confirm this equation were missing. This has now changed with the discovery of the ritual text KpT 1.72, found in Kayalıpınar in 2015. Oğuz Soysal has identified this composition as a parallel text to KBo 11.32.¹ Interestingly, when in KBo 11.32 the GUL-šeš are mentioned, we find in KpT 1.72 the *Kuwa(n)šeš* deities, corroborating the proposed identification of these divinities.

This newly discovered fact has some significant consequences, not only for our view of the Hittite pantheon, but also for the use of Anatolian hieroglyphs in Anatolia; it supports the idea that the verb *gulš-/GUL-š-* is to be read logographically and that this verb refers to writing in hieroglyphs. Considering these far-reaching implications, and the fact that my initial proposal has met with such strong disapproval, I would like to recapitulate my former arguments and refute the main points of critique before addressing the new evidence.

1. I am greatly indebted to Oğuz Soysal for allowing me to use his unpublished manuscript. I would further like to thank Alwin Kloekhorst for his valuable comments. This article results from the project “In Search of the Missing Link: Writing in Western Anatolia during the Late Bronze Age” funded by the Luwian Studies Foundation. Needless to say, I alone remain responsible for the views expressed here.

2. The verb *gulš-* = GUL-š-

In Waal 2014, I proposed that the verb that is nowadays usually cited as *gulš-* should be understood as GUL-š-, that is, as consisting of the Sumerogram GUL plus the phonetic complement -š-. This was in fact the way this verb was commonly interpreted until Carruba (1966) proposed a phonetic reading.² There are, however, several arguments against this phonetic reading of GUL-š-.

2.1. Consistent CVC Spelling

The verb GUL-š- is consistently spelled with the CVC sign GUL. Spellings of the type CV-(V)-VC (*gu-(u)-ul* or *ku-(u)-ul-*) or or CV-(V)-CV (*gu-(u)-l̥* or *ku-(u)-l̥*), which are far more natural in Hittite, are fully unattested. This is all the more remarkable considering the many attestations of the verb GUL-š- (and the related GUL-šeš deities). Moreover, almost all other Hittite words beginning with *gul-* show both CVC spelling as well as CV-(V)-VC-spellings, or only CV-(V)-VC spellings:³

CV-(V)-VC

kula- “pendant”: *ku-la-aš*, *ku-u-la-aš*;

kulai- “to fit with pendants”: *ku-la-a-an*, *ku-u-la-an*, *ku-la-i-mi-iš*, *ku-la-i-mi-en-zi*;

kulaniya- “to bring to an end”: *ku-la-ni-wi*, *ku-la-ni-it-tar*, *ku-la-ni-it-ta*;

kulawan(n)i - “military”: *ku-la-wa-ni-eš*.

In words with a double *-ll-*, we find the spelling CVC next to CV-VC:

kullakuwan “defilement”: *kul-la-ku-wa-an*, *ku-ul-la-ak-ku-wa-an*;

kulli- “honeypot”: *ku-ul-li-ša*, *ku-ul-li-ta*, *gul-li-ša*;

kullupi- “pruning knife”: *ku-ul-lu-pí*, *kul-lu-pí*, *gul-lu-bi*, *gul-lu-bi-i-it*.

Note that in the CVC spellings of *kullupi-*, the spelling GUL alternates with KUL. The only word apart from *gulš-* that shows consistent spelling with GUL is the adjective *gullant(i)-* “hollowed?”. Yet, since this word is only attested four times (HED K, 238), this could easily be due to chance.

In sum, the consistent spelling of GUL-š- with the sign GUL is highly suspicious and I consider this is an important argument in favor of interpreting GUL as a logogram in this word. Note that Carruba (1966: 37) himself conceded that a “eine Graphik **ku-ul-ša-* o.ä. wünschenswert wäre statt des sonst fast nur ideographisch gebrauchten Zeichens GUL/*gul* im Anlaut.”

2.1.1. Criticism

As far as I know, no objections have been raised against the above argument and, what is more, no alternative explanations have been offered to account for the consistent CVC spellings of *gulš-*, which *do* demand an explanation.

2. Note that, e.g., Johannes Friedrich remarked that the Hittite verb *gulš-* does not exist but is to be read as GUL-š (HW, 116). Laroche (1946–47: 71) and Otten (1957–71: 698 s.v. *Gulš-Gottheiten*) similarly doubted the phonetic reading of the *Gulšeš* deities. For further references to this discussion in earlier literature, see HEG A–K, 627 and Steitler 2017: 182 n. 1578.

3. For all attestations mentioned here, see HED K, 235–45.

2.2. Aberrant Spellings

The consistent CVC spelling is not the only thing pleading against a phonetic reading. The following spellings of the verb confirm a logographic reading:

ptc. dative *gul-an-ti* (KUB 39.17 iii 12) instead of *gul-ša-an-ti*;⁴
verbal substantive *gul-wa-ar* (KBo 55.79 obv. 7') instead of *gul-aš-šu-wa-ar*.⁵

In addition, we find the following spellings of the *Gulšeš* deities:

^d*gul-aš* (KUB 6.14 obv. 15; KUB 16.37 rev iv 10; KUB 22.4 7, 8; KUB 52.51 obv. 3) instead of ^d*gul-ša-aš*;
^d*gul-an* (KUB 59.58 i 4) instead of ^d*gul-ša-an*.

These spellings are usually explained by assuming that the scribe has mistakenly omitted the signs *aš* or *ša* and the forms are emendated accordingly (e.g., *gul-<ša>-an-ti*). This is, however, an *ad hoc* solution, which does not account for the fact that with respect to the GUL-šeš deities, GUL is sometimes followed by a Sumerian plural indicator:

^dGUL^{HLA}-uš (KUB 17.20 ii 1, KBo 54.246, 3).⁶

This spelling can only be explained if we read GUL as a Sumerogram. This means that the other spellings mentioned above are not defective, but that in these forms GUL is to be read Sumerographically as well.

2.2.2. Criticism

Yakubovich 2014 (followed by Melchert 2016) explains these spellings by assuming that in these cases, the name of the Fate deities was falsely interpreted logographically by scribes who were native speakers of Luwian. I will address the convoluted scenario he proposes more in detail below (see §6).

2.3. Old Assyrian Names Beginning with *kulš-*

One of Carruba's arguments for a phonetic reading of GUL-š- is the personal names beginning with *kulš-* (*Ku-ul-ša-an*, *Ku-ul-ša-ta-aš*) that are attested in the Old Assyrian text corpus.⁷ The semantics of these personal names are unknown and there is no reason to assume that they are in any way connected to the verb *gulš*. These names are therefore not relevant for this discussion (Waal 2014: 1021).

2.3.1 Criticism

Yakubovich (2014, again followed by Melchert 2016) does not agree that these names are irrelevant and argues that their connection with the theonym *Gulšeš* has to remain the "default" solution, "at least until

4. See HED K s.v. *gul(š)*: 242.

5. For this form, see Oettinger 1979: 203.

6. For attestations, see Van Gessel 1998, 1: 249–55 s.v. *Gul(aš)ša/Gulza/Gulzannika*. Carruba dismisses these spellings by giving some more examples of erroneous uses of HLA. This does, however, not account for the aberrant writings of *gulš-* mentioned above.

7. Yakubovich (2010: 212, 214) further mentions the names *Ku-ul-zi-a* and *Ku-ul-zi-a-ar*, which he regards as being derived from the early Luwic form of the same theonym.

plausible alternative etymologies for them can be supplied.” I find this point of view remarkable to say the least, all the more since just a few lines above, Yakubovich (2014: 289) himself concedes that “combinatory arguments must be given priority over etymological considerations.” Since there is not a shred of evidence that the Old Assyrian names and the deities of Fate are related and we are not even sure that these names are in fact Hittite, they can hardly serve as evidence for the phonetic reading of a Hittite word. As pointed out by Steitler (2017: 182 n. 578), this would be a circular argument.

2.4. Etymological Concerns

The etymological interpretation of the verb *gulš-* may sound attractive, but it is not watertight. It is generally derived from the PIE root **k^wels-*, “to draw furrows.” Kloekhorst (2007), however, has demonstrated that the sequence *K^wRCC* yields *CuwaRCC* in Hittite, which means that, for example, 3 sg. **k^wlsti* should have resulted in **ku-wa-al-aš-zi* instead of attested *gul-aš-zi*. As he observes, the verb *gulš-* is the only exception to this rule. If the verb is read logographically, the one exception to Kloekhorst’s rule would vanish. The additional evidence produced by Carruba (1966: 35–37) for a phonetic reading of *gulš-* is not cogent and can also be explained otherwise.⁸

2.4.1 Criticism

According to Melchert (2016: 357), there is nothing problematic about the etymology, ignoring Kloekhorst (2007). As in the case of the above-discussed Old Assyrian names, however, even if the etymology were straightforward, this would not be a conclusive argument. The fact that we now have to give up this etymology is, to quote Moses Finley, “a pity, but not an argument.”

3. GUL-š- = Kuwa(n)š-

Let us now turn to the equation of the GUL-šeš and the *Kuwa(n)šeš* deities. The reasons which prompted me to this identification are as follows:

3.1. GUL-zā(i)- and REL-za-

As I have argued elsewhere, the Hittite verb GUL-š-, and C(uneiform).Luwian GUL-zā(i)- mean “to write, to draw” and refer to writing in hieroglyphs (Waal 2011, 2014). If we accept this interpretation, one would expect to find a similar or related verb for “to write” in H(ieroglyphic).Luwian. One of the verbs for “to write” in H.Luwian is the verb REL-za-, which, like GUL-š-, was used to refer to hieroglyphic inscriptions in stone. These verbs also share formal similarities; both H.Luwian and C.Luwian have a stem ending in -za. It is therefore plausible to assume we might in fact be dealing with one and the same verb here.

8. The fact that the verb *gulš-* behaves like any other Hittite verb with the sequence liquid/nasal + s in the stem, could also indicate that the underlying verb ends with liquid/nasal + s (see Waal 2014: 1021 and below §4.1).

3.2. The Phonetic Reading of REL-za- and GUL-š-/GUL-zā(i)-

The phonetic reading of H.Luwian REL is /kwa/ or /kwi/, which means the H.Luwian verb REL-za is to be read as /kwi(n)za-/ or /kwa(n)za-/. If we accept that the verbs REL-za- and GUL-š-/GUL-zā(i)- are related, the corresponding Hittite verb would be /kwa(n)š-/ or /kwi(n)š-/. No such verbs have been attested in In Hittite with the meaning “to write.” There is the verb *kuwašš-*, but this means “to kiss” (HED K, 311–12).

With respect to the GUL-šēš deities, the phonetic readings one would expect to find in Hittite would be:

/kwa(n)šēš/ for GUL-šēš
 /kwa(n)ša/ for GUL-ša
 /kwa(n)za/ for the Luwian deity GUL-za.

It so happens that the deity/deities *Kuwa(n)šēš*, *Kuwa(n)ša* and their Luwian counterpart *Kuwanza* are attested in the Hittite text corpus. Similar to the GUL-šēš deities, the *Kuwa(n)šēš* deities mostly appear in plural but may also be attested in singular. We thus have the following pairs:

<i>Kuwanšēš/ Kuwaššēš</i>	/	GUL-šēš
<i>Kuwanša/ Kuwašša</i>	/	GUL-ša
<i>Kuwanza</i>	/	GUL-za

Could *Kuwa(n)šēš* / *Kuwa(n)ša* / *Kuwanza* be the phonetic rendering of GUL-šēš / GUL-ša / GUL-za? In order for this equation to work, the formal as well as functional characteristics of these deities need to concur.

4. The *Kuwa(n)šēš* Deities and the GUL-šes Deities

4.1. Formal Characteristics

The above proposed identification meets no formal problems: for the fact that nasal+s yields Luwian -nz- compare, for example, the acc. pl. anim. -nza < *-ns (Melchert 2003: 178). In addition, the frequent spellings GUL-aš-ša- may be interpreted as GUL plus a phonetic complement, representing the underlying word *Kuwašša* (< *Kuwanša*). It is further of interest that the *Kuwa(n)šēš* deities often occur in (later copies of) Old or Middle Hittite texts, in which more deities, whose names are frequently written with a Sumero-gram, are spelled out phonetically (see below §5).

4.1.1 Criticism

Melchert (2016: 357) rightly points out that in the above scenario one would expect a spelling *GUL-an-ša/še- and not only GUL-aš-ša-/še-. However, this absence may be explained by the fact that already from the MH period onwards (there are no logographic spellings from the OH period) we find the spelling *Kuwaššēš* (see KBo 17.35 rev. iii 15). This shows that by that time -nš- had already assimilated to -šš- and that the names of the deities were generally pronounced as *Kuwašša/ Kuwaššēš*.

4.2. The Palaic GUL-zannikeš

Related to the GUL-šēš/*Kuwa(n)šēš* are the Palaic deities GUL-zannikeš, who are only attested in plural. Melchert (2016: 356) considers this Palaic form to be fatal for my analysis. He argues that the reading GUL-

zannikeš is not credible, as logographic spellings are rare in Palaic and the combination of a Sumerogram followed by five syllabic signs is highly unlikely. It is true that logographic spellings in Palaic texts are not frequent, but they are certainly not absent, see, for example, LUGAL: LUGAL-*i* (KUB 35.165 obv. 21); GİR: GİR-*an-pát* (KBo 19.153 rev. iii 7', 19'), ÍD: ÍD-*an-aš-ta* (KBo 19.153 rev. iii 7, 18), ÍD-*aš-ta* (KUB 35.166+ 1', 10').

As for the second argument, such a combined logographic-phonetic spelling indeed looks unusual, but if one considers that in Palaic the names of deities are often supplemented with suffixes, this becomes less disconcerting. The Hittite *Ilialiantēš* deities are called the *Ilialiantikeš* in Palaic, compare also the Palaic deities *Uliliantikeš*. The GUL-*šeš* deities are supplemented with a similar suffix, which is spelled out phonetically, thus yielding GUL-*zannikeš*.⁹ The fact that this spelling, which only occurs in three texts (Van Gessel 1998: 255), may look odd to us is thus rather due to the Palaic habit of adding extra suffixes to names of deities.¹⁰ Further, against these few seemingly eccentric spellings in Palaic stand numerous unexplained strange CVC spellings in Hittite, if one does not accept the logographic reading GUL-*š*.

4.3. Functional Characteristics

The *Kuwa(n)šeš* deities have been attested some fourteen times in Hittite texts.¹¹ These attestations appear in similar contexts as the GUL-*šeš* (Luwian GUL-*za*, Palaic GUL-*zannikeš*), who are attested much more often.¹² The main characteristics of the *Kuwa(n)šeš* compared to the GUL-*šeš* deities may be summarized as follows:

- Like the GUL-*šeš*, the *Kuwa(n)šeš* occur in plural and singular. This is noteworthy, for most Hittite deities are attested either in plural, or in singular.
- Like the GUL-*šeš*, the *Kuwa(n)šeš* have a Luwian counterpart (GUL-*za*/ *Kuwanza*).
- Like the GUL-*šeš*, the *Kuwa(n)šeš* are also part of the Palaic pantheon (Steitler 2017: 81).
- The *Kuwanša*/ *Kuwa(n)šeš* deities are often attested in older texts (KBo 17.35, KUB 43.30, Bo 3752) or later copies of older compositions (KBo 11.32, KUB 58.38), in which (most) other deities are rendered phonetically instead of with a Sumerogram.
- The Luwian deity *Kuwanza* was still worshipped in the first millennium BCE (Popko 1995: 169, Taracha 2009: 52) and continues to be attested in Anatolian personal names in the Hellenistic period (Houwink ten Cate 1965: 138–39; Popko 1995: 169). From this one may conclude that she was considered an important deity “who must have been firmly embedded in a cultural milieu that also survived after the collapse of the Hittite Empire” (Steitler 2017: 81). By contrast, there are no names or deities from the later period that can be linked to the stem *gulš*.
- The *Kuwa(n)šeš* deities appear in similar contexts as the GUL-*šeš*, such as the rituals of the Netherworld, and for the most part in close connection with the same gods, such as the Deity of the

9. For these Palaic suffixes, see Laroche 1946–47: 71; see also Carruba 1970: 61.

10. Since the Fate deities were important and well-known deities it can reasonably be expected that their phonetic reading was known to the Ḫattuša scribes (contra Yakubovich 2014: 290).

11. For attestations, see Van Gessel 1998: 276 s.v. *Kuwanša/i* and Otten 1980–83: 398 s.v. *Kuwanši*, to which we may now add KBo 47.241 obv. 13'; see Steitler 2017: 79 and KpT 1.72 (Soysal, forthcoming).

12. For attestations, see Van Gessel 1998, 1: 249–55 s.v. *Gul(aš)ša/Gulza/Gulzannika*.

Night, the Moongod, *Mezulla*, *Maliya*, *Ḫašammili*, *Ḫilašši*, and *Ḫalki*.¹³ This also applies to the Palaic GUL-*zannikeš*.¹⁴

- In one ritual text, KBo 11.32, both the *Kuwa(n)šeš* and GUL-*šeš* deities are mentioned. Considering the context, the *Kuwa(n)šeš* appear where one would expect the GUL-*šeš* deities (see below §5).

4.3.1. Criticisms

Archi (2013: 18), Melchert (2016: 357), and Yakubovich (2014: 291) have argued that the *Kuwa(n)šeš* cannot be the GUL-*šeš* because the contexts in which they appear are different. They come to this conclusion because the *Kuwa(n)šeš* are never attested together with the DINGIR.MAH^{MES}, who do very often accompany the GUL-*šeš* deities in birth rituals. The *Kuwa(n)šeš* are on the other hand frequently accompanied by the deity *Waškuwattaššiš*, who does not occur together with the GUL-*šeš*. Though this may seem problematic at first glance, this apparent discrepancy can be explained if one bears in mind that in the texts in which *Kuwa(n)šeš* appear the names of deities are mostly written phonetically, whereas the GUL-*šeš* are usually surrounded by deities whose names are (also) written Sumerographically. Quite often, as in the case of the DINGIR.MAH^{MES}, we do not know the phonetic readings behind these Sumerograms, which obstructs and muddles our view (Waal 2014: 1029).

5. KBo 11.32 and KpT 1.72

Let us now turn to KBo 11.32 and its newly discovered parallel text from Kayalıpınar: KpT 1.72. In KBo 11.32, both the GUL-*šeš* deities and the *Kuwa(n)šeš* deities make an appearance. The tablet contains a description of ceremonies concerning sacrifices around the hearth (Haas 1994: 273–74). It consists of the following parts:

- First, a black lamb is sacrificed to the Moon God of the Night.¹⁵
- Then, after some ritual acts, a white lamb is sacrificed to the GUL-*šeš* deities.¹⁶
- The third sacrifice consists of an offering of a billy goat, whose horns have been anointed with oil, to *Maliya* and the male deities.¹⁷
- A further ritual is performed and then twelve breads are broken, which are laid around the eaves of the roof. Then someone calls out a list of deities, in which *Kuwa(n)ša* / *Kuwa(n)šeš* is mentioned.¹⁸

KBo 11.32 obv. 31–40 (CTH 645, NS)

31. *ne-pí-<ša>-aš* ^dU-*aš* GAM-*ši-ma-ši an-na-aš* KI-*aš*

32. ^dUTU-*uš* KI.MIN ^d*me-zul-la-aš*

33. ^dNIN.URTA-*aš* KI.MIN ^d*ḫal-kiš*

13. For occurrences of the Deities of Fate together with the Deity of the Night and the Moon God, see Haas 1994: 781; for occurrences with *Ḫilašši* (the Deity of the Gate), see Haas 1994: 281, 781; with *Mezulla*, see Haas 1994: 257; with *Maliya*, see Haas 1994: 779. The deity *Ḫalki* is attested together with the Fate deities *Papaya-Ištuštaya*; see Haas 1994: 716.

14. Compare, e.g., KBo 17.35 and KUB 35.165 (see also Steitler 2017: 81 n. 265).

15. KBo 11.32 obv. 1–3: LUGAL-*uš* IGI-*zi* GUNNI *ti-ia-zi* (2) ^dXXX GE₆ UŠ-KE-EN *nu-kán* 1 LU GE₆ (3) ^dXXX GE₆ BAL-*an-ti*.

16. KBo 11.32 obv. 10: 1 SILA₄ BABBAR ^dGUL-*ša-aš* BAL-*ti*.

17. KBo 11.32 obv. 23–24: *nu-kán* MÁŠ.ŠIR SI^{HLA} *ī-za iš-kán-zi* (24) *na-an-kán* DINGIR LÚ^{MES}-*aš* ^d*ma-li-ia* BAL-*ti*.

18. This list has also been attested in two other texts, KUB 43.30 and KUB 58.38. In the Old Hittite text KUB 43.33 all gods mentioned are written phonetically. In the later copies KBo 11.32 and KUB 58.38 most, though not all, have been replaced by logographic writings (Waal 2014: 1026–27).

34. ^dXXX-*aš* KI.MIN GE₆-*za* ^d*še-pa*
 35. GUNNI KI.MIN ^d*hi-la-ši-iš*
 36. DINGIR.LÚ^{MEŠ}-*aš* KI.MIN ^d*ma-li-aš*
 37. ^d*ma-li-aš* KI.MIN DINGIR.LÚ^{MEŠ}-*aš*
 38.¹⁹ ^d*wa-as-ku-at-ta-ši-iš* KI.MIN ^d***ku-wa-an-š[a-aš / š[e-eš]***²⁰

The Storm God of Heaven with Mother Earth beside him;
 The Sun goddess with *Mezzula* beside her;
 The deity NIN.URTA with the Deity of Grain beside her;
 The Moon God with *Išpanzašepa* beside him;
 The Deity of the Hearth with the Deity of the Courtyard beside him;
 The Male Deities with *Maliya* beside them;
Maliya with the Male Deities beside her;
Waškuwattašiš with *Kuwanša/Kuwanšes* beside him.

All the gods to whom sacrifices have been made in the first part of the ritual, the Moon God, *Maliya*, and the male deities, reappear in the list of gods at the end, together with other deities. The GUL-*šeš* deities, however, to whom a white lamb had been sacrificed, are *not* repeated in this list. As I observed in 2014, “this discrepancy would be solved if we assume that the *Kuwa(n)šeš* deities are in fact to be identified with the GUL-*šeš* deities: in this case all deities to which sacrifices have been made earlier in KBo 11.32 reappear in the list of gods that follows, the GUL-*šeš* now spelled phonetically” (Waal 2014: 1027).

The above suggestion has now been confirmed by the new parallel text KpT 1.72. As shown by Oğuz Soysal (in press), the ritual actions described in the text, as well as the names of the deities that are celebrated during the hearth festivals concur. As he observes, when the GUL-*šeš* occur in the beginning of KBo 11.32, KpT 1.72 mentions the *Kuwa(n)šeš* deities. He summarizes his finding as follows:

KpT 1.72 obv.	KBo 11.32 obv.
7. ^d <i>SĪN</i>	2-3. ^d <i>SĪN</i> GE ₆
9. ^d <i>SĪN</i>	4. ^d <i>SĪN</i>
15. ^d <i>Kuwanšaš</i>	10. ^d GUL-šaš
26. DINGIR.MEŠ.LÚ.MEŠ	17. DINGIR.MEŠ.LÚ.MEŠ
27. DINGIR.MEŠ LÚ.MEŠ- <i>aš</i> ^d <i>Mal]iya</i>	19. DINGIR.MEŠ LÚ.MEŠ- <i>aš</i> ^d <i>Maliya</i>
32. DINGIR.MEŠ LÚ.MEŠ- <i>aš</i> ^d <i>Maliya</i>	24. DINGIR.MEŠ LÚ.MEŠ- <i>aš</i> ^d <i>Maliya</i>

In KpT 1.72, the ^d*Kuwanšes* receive the sacrifice that the ^dGUL-*šeš* receive in KBo 11.32. This corroborates that *Kuwanšes* is indeed the phonetic reading behind ^dGUL-*šeš*. In KBo 11.32, their name is thus first written logographically, and when they reappear in the concluding list of gods their name is spelled out phonetically.

19. Mistakenly numbered as line 39 in hand copy.

20. As kindly suggested to me by Oğuz Soysal, the restoration ^d*ku-wa-an-š[a-aš]* may be preferable in light of the (damaged) occurrence of ^d*wa-as-ku-at-ta-ši-iš* [^d*k*u-wa-an-š[a]-*aš* in another ritual on this tablet (lines 62–63).

6. The Alternative Scenario: The *interpretatio luvica*

As mentioned earlier, Ilya Yakubovich (2014) has proposed a different scenario to explain the evidence at hand. He does not accept the logographic interpretation GUL-š- but adheres to the phonetic reading *gulš* -, derived from the IE stem **k^wels-*. He does, however, see a connection between the Luwian goddess *Kwanza* and the GUL/*gulšeš*. According to him, *Kwanza* was the functional equivalent of the Hittite GUL/*gulšeš* as well as an Anatolian cognate. In order to derive Luwian *kwanza-* from IE **k^wels-*, “to draw,” he assumes a sound change from **/ls/ > /nts/* in Luwian. Though the first proposed stage */ls/* to */lts/* is accepted for Luwian (Melchert 2003: 183), the second stage has not been attested, and as he himself concedes, it is falsified by Luwian forms such as *gulza-* (see below). He therefore postulates that the incipient sound change */lts/ > /nts/* was characteristic of the Luwian dialect of Ḫattuša, but not for the dialect of Kizzuwatna in the late second millennium, and that it later generalized in Iron Age Luwian. This would “support the comparison between Hitt. *gulsa-* and Luw. *kwanza-*, given that the attestations of the Luwian deity *Kwanza* are restricted to the Iron Age period.”

Though such a scenario might theoretically be possible, it is based on feeble evidence and feels unnecessarily complicated. More importantly, it still leaves the problem of the form *gulza-*, which is present in the Luwian dialect of Ḫattuša, thus contradicting the above-proposed sound changes. How is this to be explained? Yakubovich does this by proposing a restricted version of my hypothesis, with an only partial logographic interpretation of the names of the deities of Fate. This reading was supposedly “limited to the perspective of those literati whose native language was Luwian,” who misinterpreted the spelling *gul-še-eš* as GUL-še-eš (Yanukovych 2014: 292). This could have happened because of the false association between the Hittite *gulšeš* and the *Kuwa(n)šeš*, which he explains as follows (Yakubovich 2014: 292):

After all, the folk etymology that appeared good enough to a well-trained and talented Hittitologist Willemijn Waal could also guide the aspiring scribes of Luwian origin, who arguably had less Hittitological training. Both Waal and the Luwian scribes were aware that the Luwian functional equivalent of *Gulses* was *Kwanza*, and none of them had sufficient reasons to assume that Hitt. *ḫGulsa-* and Luw. *Kwanza-* were genetically related. Accordingly, Hitt. *ḫKuwans(i)-* may have been taken as a false cognate of Luw. *Kwanza*, while Hitt. *ḫGUL-sa-* came to be analyzed as a pseudo-Sumerographic spelling of the former theonym. The Hittite verb *guls-^{mi}* “to carve, engrave”, which was perceived as the synchronic cognate of the Hittite Fates, was accordingly misinterpreted as GUL-s-^{mi}. Finally, it was only natural to extend the spelling conventions for the two Hittite lexemes to their Luwian synonyms and cognates embedded in Hittite cuneiform texts. Hence one finds the spelling GUL-za- rendering both the Luwian theonym *Kwanza* and the stem of Luw. *kwanza^{di}* “to carve, engrave.”

Melchert (2016) approves of this line of reasoning, but I find it difficult to accept these conclusions. I cannot speak for the Luwian (if they were in fact Luwian—this is by no means certain!) scribes, but I myself have not come to my proposal because I was misled by a folk etymology, but through a series of deductions, which have been exposed above. One of the main reasons was in fact the consistent CVC spelling of GUL-š-, which is *not* explained in this scenario. It is instead used as an argument to account for the supposed confusion of the scribes, who reinterpreted the word as a Sumerogram because of this unfailing CVC spelling.

However, even if we accept this scenario for argument’s sake, there are still difficulties, mostly with respect to the *Kuwa(n)šeš* s deities. Yakubovich (2014: 291) does not see any relation between the *Kuwa(n)šeš* and the GUL/*gulšeš* deities (see also above §4.3.1). The only reason why the *Kuwa(n)šeš* are falsely associated with the GUL/*gulšeš* is because of their phonetic resemblance to the Luwian deity *Kwanza*, whom he considers to be the functional equivalent of the GUL/*gulšeš* (Yakubovich 2014: 292). Reading this, one gets the impression that the gods of the Hittite pantheon were completely interchangeable, and the scribes

could mix and match their names at will, as if these deities did not have their own individual identities and cults. Especially in the case of the important and well-known Fate deities, it is difficult to believe that they would simply be merged with an—according to Yakubovich—unrelated group of deities (the *Kuwa(n)šeš*), only because their name happened to sound like that of their Luwian counterpart *Kwanza*.

All in all, a very complicated scenario unfolds, in which one has to assume various highly specific sound changes, misinterpretations, reanalyses, and false associations, and which leaves a number of facts (notably the consistent CVC spelling of GUL-š-) unexplained. If, by contrast, one accepts that the GUL-šēš are the *Kuwa(n)šeš*, there is no need for any *ad hoc* solutions and assumptions. If only from the point of view of the *lex parsimoniae*, this solution is therefore preferable.

7. Conclusions, Open Questions, and Implications

To conclude, there are a large number of compelling arguments in favor of a logographic reading of the verb, GUL-š-, whereas there is no conclusive evidence supporting a phonetic reading. Based on the formal as well as semantic similarities the *Kuwa(n)šeš* deities may be identified as the phonetic writing of the GUL-šēš deities. This identification has now been confirmed by KpT 1.72, a parallel text of KBo 11.32, in which the *Kuwa(n)šeš* appear where the GUL-šēš are mentioned in KBo 11.32.

7.1. Why GUL?

An important question that remains is why the Sumerogram GUL was chosen to represent the name of the Deities of Fate and the verb for “to write, draw.” As for the relation between these two, the *Kuwa(n)šeš* deities were presumably seen to “draw” or “write” the destiny of humanity.²¹ The choice for the Sumerogram GUL is puzzling in this context. Its basic meaning is “to strike” or “destroy” and in Hittite it was also used to represent the verb *walḫ-*, “to hit, beat.”²² The Sumerogram GUL is not known to represent any verb for “writing” in Mesopotamia. This is no immediate cause for alarm, as there are more examples of aberrant and unexplained usages of Sumerograms in Hittite (Weeden 2011: 376–82). As I have suggested earlier, the connection may have to be sought in the Sumerogram BUR.GUL, “seal-cutter,” “engraver,” but this is speculative.²³

21. As the verb GUL-š- may also mean “to draw” this does not necessarily imply the existence of literacy, as the gods may have communicated through signs. For a different view on the relation between writing and gods of destiny, see Yakubovich 2014: 282.

22. This implies that the same Sumerogram is used for two different verbs. This is not unparalleled: compare, e.g., BAL, “to sacrifice,” “to change,” “to revolt”; LAL, “to bind,” “to look”; SĒD, “to hibernate,” “to be satisfied.” Since both GUL, “to write (hieroglyphs)” and GUL, “to hit, are usually spelled with phonetic complements, and their semantic range is quite large, there would hardly have been risk of confusion. As for the fact that the verb is consistently written with a Sumerogram, this is not unprecedented either; e.g., the verb *lazziie/a-* is practically always spelled with the Sumerogram SIG₅ and the derivative verbs **lazzieš-* and **lazziaḫ-* have only been attested written Sumerographically. The consistent Sumerographic spelling would only form an objection in the Old Hittite period, when finite verbs are not written with a Sumerogram, but the oldest attestation of GUL-š- stems from the Middle Hittite period (see also Waal 2014: 1021–22).

23. Alternatively, if one accepts that the Hieroglyphic Luwian script in fact predates the cuneiform script, the connection may lie in the formal features of the sign. The sign GUL bears some resemblance to the H.Luwian sign REL, especially in the archaic writing direction of cuneiform, which was preserved at least until the middle of the second millennium BCE on most stone monuments and all inscribed cylinder seals (e.g., Walker 1987: 14). Needless to say, this suggestion is very tentative as well. Note that Yakubovich 2014: 293–94 proposes that the (in his eyes false) reinterpretation of GUL as a Sumerogram may have been prompted by the association between carving and striking. The Luwian verb *kwanza* came to be perceived as being related to the root *kwan*, “to strike,” because Anatolian hieroglyphic inscriptions were cut/struck into the stone surface. This folk-etymology would facilitate the associations of the *kwanza* (“to write”) with the Sumerogram GUL (“to strike”). This argument is followed by Melchert 2016.

7.2. Hieroglyphic Writing in Anatolia

Lastly, we may briefly contemplate on the wider implications of the above. In the past, I have made a case for a broader use of the Anatolian hieroglyphs, suggesting that they were used on wooden documents for private and daily economic records that have not survived (Waal 2011). I will not reiterate all my arguments here, but one of them was the fact that different terminology is used for writing on wooden writing boards as opposed to writing on clay. Clay tablets are written by a “scribe” (DUB.SAR), whereas wooden documents are written by a “wood-scribe” (DUB.SAR.GIŠ). Similarly, a different verb, namely, GUL-š-, is used in connection to wooden writing boards. This distinctive terminology implies a fundamental difference, which (in combination with other evidence) led me to suggest that GUL-š- must refer to writing in hieroglyphs.

This hypothesis has gained considerable strength by the corroboration of the identification of the GUL-šeš with the *Kuwa(n)šeš* deities. After all, the sole incentive for connecting these two different groups of deities was the very assumption that the Hittite verbs GUL-š- (and C.Luwian GUL-zā(i)-) referred to writing in hieroglyphs. This prompted me to link C.Luwian GUL-zā(i)- to one of the verbs for writing in H.Luwian, namely REL-za-. The next step was to transport the phonetic reading of REL-za-, which is /kwanza-/ or /kwinza-/, to Hittite, where this would have yielded /kwa(n)š-/ or /kwi(n)š-/. This, in turn, led to the *Kuwa(n)šeš* deities. If one does not accept that the initial hypothesis, namely, that GUL-š- refers to writing in hieroglyphs, is correct, the fact that I was able to recognize the *Kuwa(n)šeš* as the phonetic reading of the GUL-šeš deities, would have been an extraordinary stroke of luck—or perhaps more fittingly—of fate.

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