

ANOTHER THORNY PROBLEM

Students of Indo-European are beset by thorns, from the third letter of the Runic alphabet through the Hieroglyphic Luvian excrescent + *ra/i* to Brugmann's 'Notbehelf' **kp* of such cognate sets as the word for 'bear'; see J. Schindler, "A thorny problem," *Die Sprache* 23 (1977) 25ff. Our problem is simpler, however sticky; it is a pleasure to offer a suggestion for its solution to Professor Bojan Čop, who has so enriched Hittite studies over so many years.

'Hawthorn' is the common English name for 'small trees or shrubs of the Rose Family included in the genus *Crataegus*. They have attractive white, pink, or occasionally red flowers, usually clustered, followed by small, decorative apple-like fruits; in some species these remain on the branches until midwinter, in others they are juicy enough to be made into jelly. The branches are spiny, and the deciduous foliage often turns brilliant red or orange in the fall." [E.L.D. Seymour, *The Garden Encyclopedia*, New York: W.H. Wise & Co., 1939, p. 598]. There are numerous species, reportedly a thousand in North America alone; a common European variety is *Crataegus oxycantha*, also known in Britain as May, as in the ship's name *Mayflower*, and more often as Whitethorn (cf. German *Weissdorn*).

The plant is known from Anatolia (Turkish *yabani akdiken* 'wild white-thorn'), and has long been recognized in Hittite ^{GIŠ}*ḫat(t)alkišnaš*, glossed by Friedrich as 'Weissdorn'. The principal attestations may be found in H. Ertem, *Flora* 92 (Ankara, 1974). The characteristics of this plant in Hittite are such as to make the identification very plausible: a thorny plant whose branches spike tufts of wool from passing sheep, white in the spring and red in the fall, from whose fruit a juice is extracted (Hoffner, *Alimenta* 16, 120, probably referring to ^{GIŠ}*ḫatalkišnaš galaktar* KUB 28.102 iv 13). Already Heinrich Otten noted the topos in the language of cult, in a well-known article in *AfO* 16, 1952, 69–71. In KUB 33.54 + 47 ii 13ff. (OH/NS), restored after KUB 17.10 (OH/MS), the plant is apostrophized with the words

zig=az ^{GIŠ}*ḫa-tal-kiš-na-aš ḫameḫiy=az* BABBAR^{TIM} wašša[ši]
EBUR-ma=az iṣḫarwand[a w]aššaši GUD-uš=ta=kkan katti=[ti]
arḫa paizzi nu=šš[e=šta šu]kšūqqan ḫuez[ta]
UDU-u[š=m]a=ta=kkan katti=ti [(arḫa) paizz(i)]
[(nu=šš)]e=šta ēšri [(ḫuez)]ta

You are the hawthorn. In the spring you dress in white, but in the fall you dress in red. The ox passes beneath you, and you pull its hair; the sheep

passes beneath you, and you pull its wool. (In the same way pull the wrath, anger, exasperation and fury of the god.)

Compare also KUB 34.76 i 1ff. and Laroche, *Myth. anat.* 139.

Hans Güterbock recently published another example of the same topos, from an unpublished Mašat tablet (of 13th century date), uncharacteristically a “Vanishing God” myth text, whose photograph happened to adorn the cover of a Turkish archeological publication, *Mašat Höyük II*, by Tahsin Özgüç (*Anadolu Araştırmaları* 10, 1986, 205–14, Fs. B. Alkim). It shows the variant w]aššiaši ‘you dress, clothe yourself in’.

On the level of phraseology, it is perhaps worth noting that just as the hawthorn is clothed in white or red (Hitt. *wešš-*), so the soma-plant is described as ‘clothed in...’ in the Rig Veda (Ved. *vas-*). The hawthorn could also be decorated. In an episode of the “Vanishing God” myth in a birth ritual (G. Beckman, StBoT 29.77) the goddess ^dAnzilis ‘sat down under the bedecked *ḫatalkešna*-tree, *n=aš=za kattan unuwan[taš (GIŠḫatalkešnaš eš)at]*.

It is clear from the several examples of this topos that the plant played an important role in the symbolic culture of the Hittites. As Otten noted, a widespread practice in Hittite ritual involves the construction of a ‘gate’ (KA) of hawthorn, through which the participants had to pass. The thorny branches had a purificatory value: they removed evil like tufts of hair and wool. Compare KUB 12.44 (CTH 392, ritual of ^fAnnā) iii 2’ff.

nu ŠA GIŠSAR.GEŠTIN kuwapi KA.ḪI.A-eš nu KA-aš
EGIR-an kēz kēzziya tēkan paddaḫḫi
n=ašta kēz kēzzi<ya> pattešni anda
3 GIŠḫatalkiš (*sic*) tittanummi

nu kiššan temi idāluš=wa=ššan
antūwaḫza (leg. antuwaḫḫaš?) idāluš EME-aš
idālawa IGI.ḪI.A-wa GIŠḫattalkišnit
kattan tarmān ešdu

And where the vineyard gate is, I dig the ground behind the gate on each side and I put 3 hawthorn (branches) in the hole on each side and I speak as follows: “May the evil man, the evil tongue, the evil eyes be spiked down by the hawthorn”.

As Craig Melchert points out to me, the “short” form *ḫatalkiš* is significant, and may indicate an earlier inflexion *ḫatalkiš*, oblique *ḫatalkišn(a)*- like *tunnakiš* (KBo 22.2 Ro. 9), obl. *tunnakišn(a)*- ‘inner chamber’. Singular number after numerals higher than one is perfectly grammatical in Hittite (H.A. Hoffner, *Alimenta Hethaeorum* 157–8 [New Haven, 1974]; cf. OH 5 *alkistāš-šiš* ‘five its branches’).

The now standard etymology, reported in Tischler, *Hitt. etym. Glossar* 218, is due to the Jubilar, B. Čop, in *Slavistična Revija (Linguistica)* 11, 1958, 54f. as well as in his *Indogermanica Minora* 1971, 30f. The word is a compound of *alkišan-* 'branch, bough', possibly thematized with cluster simplification (-) *alkiš[t]na-*. In view of the spelling *ḫatalkiš* above we may prefer to take the simplest form of the second member as just *alkiš*; for a suggested etymology of this element cf. Hoffmann apud Mayrhofer, *KEWA* 3.796; less likely Puhvel, *Hitt. Etym. Dict.* 1.36. In this case the *-na-* (or thematized *-n-a-*) of nom. sg. *ḫatalkišnaš* would be suffixal, and not directly related to the different further suffix of *alkiš-tan-* (nom. sg. *alkištāš*) 'branch, bough'

The first element of the compound Čop identified with a derivative of the thematic verb *a-* middle *ḫatt^a* '(ab)stechen, abschneiden, schlagen'. The analysis as compound is maintained, with slightly differing views on the suffixation, by N. Oettinger *MSS* 34, 1976, 125 (repeated *Indo-Hittite-Hypothese und Wortbildung*, IBS Vorträge 37 [1986] p. 23; *Studien zum idg. Wortschatz*, ed. W. Meid, Innsbruck, 1987, p. 192) and J. Puhvel, loc. cit. Other views may be found in Tischler, loc. cit.

Oettinger loc.cit., n. 54, made the important caveat that the spelling of the first element of the compound with single dental *ḫa-ta-* was inexplicable by the verb root *ḫatt-*, which shows consistent double dental since Old Hittite times (attestations in Oettinger), pointing to [-t-] not [-d-]. The related verb *ḫazziya-* 'hit on, hit (the target), pluck (a stringed instrument)' from **ḫat-je/o-* requires the same conclusion.

For the plant the spelling *ḫatalk-* predominates in older sources, like the mythological texts cited above. We find the following distribution:

<i>ḫatalk-</i>	KUB	17.10	(Telepinu-myth OH/MS) CTH 324 (2x)
		33.54	(^D MAḪ-myth OH/NS) 334
		34.76	(")
	KBo	17.47	(ritual of ^f Annā of Pala OH/MS?) 470
		12.96	(" " ^D LAMMA ^{KUŠ} kuršaš NH/NS) 433
	VBoT	24	(" " Anniwiyaniš MH/NS) 393
	KBo	14.132	(" with Hurrian MS?) 791
	KUB	28.102	(" of Hutusi OH/NS) 732
		12.44	(" " ^f Annā of Kaplawiya NS) 392 (2x)
	[Mašat		(vanishing god myth, restored NS)]
<i>ḫattalk-</i>	KUB	12.58	(ritual of Tunnawi NS) 409
		17.28	(" for defeated army NS) 426
	Mašat		(van. god myth NS)
	Bo. 3090 250/g		(rit., context like KBo 17.47)

Single *-t-* occurs 10-11x in texts of all periods, and 3x in the two oldest manuscripts (MS). Double *-tt-* occurs 5x in Neohittite manuscripts, in similar or identical contexts to the attestations with *-t-*. The rarer and later spellings with double dental *ḫattalk-* may well be real, but reflecting a Hittite **folk-etymology** to the verb *ḫatt-* ‘stick, strike’. As folk-etymology *ḫatt-alkešnaš* in the lectio facilior; *ḫat-alkešnaš* is the lectio difficilior, reflecting the earlier initial [ḫad-]. It was probably as opaque to the Hittite as the *haw-* in *hawthorn* to the English speaker: originally just ‘hedge’, it was taken to mean the fruit of the hawthorn.

What then is the name of this Hittite plant ‘*ḫad*-branch’ or

‘*ḫad*-bush’? I suggest that the unknown element *ḫad-* in Hittite is simply an old name for the hawthorn or whitethorn, and the only cognate of Old Irish *ad** (gen. *aide*, dat. *aid*), evidently a name for the same tree, a word recently identified by Liam Breatnach.

The word is found in §24 of *Uraicecht na Ríar, The Poetic Grades in Early Irish Law*, as edited by Breatnach (Dublin 1987: D.I.A.S.). The passage, as we know from the glosses, deals with the fearsome type of satire known as *glám dícenn*. It begins *Ataat a secht con-láat cach n-air* ‘There are seven things which compose any satire’, glossed in mss. B & C *cain-luaighit cach glam dicind* ‘which initiate well any *glám dícend*’, followed by

i scáth aide caislechtai scoth
in the shade of a smooth flowery *ad*,

glossed in B & C

fo scat sciath cen deilgi fuirre
under the shade of a whitethorn, without any thorns on it.

Breatnach in his notes (138-140) cites and vindicates the one other instance of the word *ad*, in the dative in the phrase *craeb don aid* ‘branch of the *ad*’, Arch. iii 306 §14, emended out of existence by Gerard Murphy in his edition of the poem in which this occurs, *Measgra Uí Chl.* 148 §14b (to *craeb don dair* ‘branch of the oak’, as the only Irish tree-name which would rhyme). Note in passing that *craeb don aid* ‘branch of the *ad*’ recalls Hittite *ḫad-alkešnaš* ‘*ḫad*-branch’.

Breatnach in his note is careful to state that ‘these two instances do not enable us to assign to *ad* any more specific meaning than that of ‘some kind of tree.’ But it is clear from the glosses and the general context (on which presently) that the Irish took *ad* to mean *scé*, gen. *sciath* ‘whitethorn, hawthorn’.

For a true understanding of the grim reality of the general context we can do no better than to quote Breatnach in full (p. 140):

Probably the best known description of the process involved in a *glám dícend* is that in MV III §155 (IT iii 96–7). Amongst other things, it says that the seven grades of poets should go to the top of a hill before sunrise and,

with their backs to a whitethorn, the wind from the North, and a thorn from the whitethorn in each one's hand, they would (should?) chant the satire...there is another version of this in CIH 1564.27–1565.19 (beginning with a citation of the first line of §24 of our text...) which in place of ['and a thorn from the whitethorn in each one's hand' of MV] has: *no delb in fir dia ndentar do criaidh, & dealg don sgiach i laim cach fir & siat a' goin na deilbe da ndeilgib sgiach* 'or a clayen image of the man to whom it (viz. the satire) is made, and a thorn from the whitethorn in each man's hand, and they piercing the image with their whitethorn thorns.'"

We have here a very circumstantial and uncensored account of the use of the hawthorn or whitethorn in Early Irish black magic. It is evident that the plant was significant for the symbolic culture of the early Irish. Two sources preserve for us the oldest name for this plant in Irish: *ad**, gen. *aide*, dat. *aid*. By its declension the word may be either a feminine a-stem or a neuter s-stem, as Breatnach notes. The root can be reconstructed as **h₂ad-* or **h₂adh-* (underlying **h₂ed-*, **h₂edh-*). Either will yield Hitt. *had-*, the *hat-* with single dental of ^{GIŠ}*hatalkešnaš*. In view of the specificity of the identification of the plant as the hawthorn or whitethorn in both Irish and Hittite, I see no objection to equating the two words, to yield a new Indo-European tree name.

It should be stated expressly that we are specifically not reconstructing an Indo-European form of 'voodoo' or black magic involving the hawthorn, for which there is no Hittite evidence. On the contrary, in Hittite culture the plant was used for white magic, and its function was purificatory. But it may well be the (separate and unconnected) roles of the plant in the symbolic culture of these two Indo-European societies which was responsible for their preservation, alone among the Indo-European languages, of such an isolated lexical item.

Povzetek
DRUGAČEN PROBLEM S TRNI

Het. ^{GIŠ}*hat(t)alkišnaš* je bodičasta rastlina, na njenih vejah se nabirajo volneni kosmi mimoidočih ovac, je bela spomladi in rdeča ob žetvi, iz njenih sadov pa se stiska sok (Hoffner, *Alimenta* 16, 120). Friedrichova identifikacija s pomenom »Weißdorn« je zato verjetna. Sedanjo standardno etimologijo leksema dolgujemo jubilantu B. Čopu, ki je v *Slavistični reviji (Linguistica)* 11, 1958, 54 s. in v *Indogermanici minori I*, 1971, 30 s., leksem razložil kot zloženko iz izpeljanke tematskega glagola *hatt-^a* »(ab)stechen, abschneiden, schlagen« in samostalnika *alkištan* – »veja«, verjetno tematizirano s poenostavljeno soglasniško skupino (-)*alkiš/tna-*. Analizo o zloženki sta z manjšo razliko glede sufiksacije sprejela N. Oettinger in J. Puhvel.

Povezava z glagolom *hatt-* s stalnim dvojnimi zapisom dentala (od sthet. dalje) ni razložila zapisov z enojnim dentalom *ha-ta-* v prvem delu zloženke. Ker enojni zapis dentala *hatalk-* prevladujejo v starejših virih, medtem ko so dvojni zapisi dentala *hattalk-* redkejši in poznejši, se zapise z dvojnimi dentalom *hattalk-* lahko razloži z ljudskoetimološko naslonitvijo na glagol *hatt-* »prebosti, zabosti, udariti«, zapise z enojnim dentalom *hatalk-* pa šteje za prvotne. Predlagano je, da het. element *had-* ohranja staro ime za »glog« oz. »beli glog«. Svojega edinega sorodnika ima het. *had-* v stir. *ad** (rod. *aide*, daj. *aid*), ki poimenuje isto rastlino kot stir. *scé*, rod. *sciath* »glog, beli glog«. Besedna zveza *craeb don aid* »veja *ad-a*« je primerljiva s het. *had-alkišnaš* »*had*-veja«.

Het. *had-* v ^{Giš}*hatalkešnaš* in stir. *ad**, rod. *aide*, daj. *aid* (glede sklanjatvenega vzorca je lahko *a*-deblo ženskega spola kot tudi *s*-deblo srednjega spola) dovoljjeta rekonstrukcijo osnove **h₂ad-* ali **h₂adh-* (prednostno **h₂ed-*, **h₂edh-*) in tako odkrivata novo indoevropsko rastlinsko ime.

Glog je v hetitski kulturi v beli magiji uporabljan v očiščevalne namene, v zgodnji irski pa v črni magiji. Potrebno pa je poudariti, da je vloga iste rastline v simbolni kulturi dveh različnih indoevropskih družb lahko povsem ločena in vzporedna in ne more kazati na kako posebno vlogo gloga pri Indoevropejcih.