

## The Hurrian Word for “Brideprice” in an Akkadian Text from Alalah IV

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In a recent study of several obscure passages of the Mittani letter, Girbal has convincingly suggested the meaning of *waduranni* as the Hurrian word for “brideprice” (or, probably more exactly, “bridal gift”).<sup>16</sup> He based this interpretation on both the context and the Akkadian parallel word *terḫatu* which appears in similar contexts in the other Amarna letters of Tušratta written in Akkadian. He also pointed out the uniform syllabic spelling of this term in the four attestations: *ú-a-du-ra-a-an-ni-ma-a-an* (*waduranni=man*) (Mit. I 65, II 15), *ú-a-du-ra-a-a-an-na* (*wadurann(i)=a*) (Mit. III 68, 69).

More recently, following Girbal's interpretation, Mayrhofer has attempted to explain the Indo-Aryan etymology of this Hurrian “Rechtsterminus” he normalised as *uadurānni*.<sup>17</sup> Interestingly, he proposes to analyse the root as IAr. \**uad<sup>h</sup>ū-rā-* < Ved. *vadhū* “bride, young woman”, *rā* “gift”. That the term may indeed be a loanword is further suggested by the Hurrian suffix =*nni*.<sup>18</sup>

If this etymology is correct, we should include it under the long list of Indo-Aryan loanwords with the =*nni* suffix in the Hurrian lexicon (partly borrowed in turn by Akkadian), such as: *mariḫanni* < Ved. *márya-* “young man” (> Akk. *maryannu*), *maganni* < Ved. *maghá-* “present, gift” (> Akk. *magannu*), *maninni* < Ved. *mañf-* “necklace” (> Akk. *maninnu*), *martiḫanni* < Ved. *mártiya-* “man, person”, or *urukmanni* < Ved. *rukma-* “golden jewellery” (> Akk. *urukmannu*). Moreover, note two other possible examples from the same Alalah IV archive: *ašuyanni* < Ved. *áśva-* “horse”, and *aratiḫanni* < Ved. *ráthya-* “belonging to the chariot”.<sup>19</sup>

Now, as we suggest, the Hurrian word for “brideprice” is also attested in the corpus of Alalah IV, that means about a century earlier than the examples in the Mittani letter.

The Akkadian text AT 94 describes a marriage contract presided by the king of Alalah, presumably Ilimilimma, son of Niqmepa, since his seal is impressed on top of the document.<sup>20</sup> The clause in which the

16. “Kommentare zu einigen Stellen aus dem Mittanni-Brief”, *SMEA* 34 (1994) 83-84.

17. “Ein indo-arischer Rechtsterminus im Mittanni-Brief?”, *Historische Sprachforschung* 109 (1996) 161-162.

18. See already E. von Schuler, “Hurritische Nomina Actoris”, *RHA* 68 (1961) 19, and F.W. Bush, “The Relationship between the Hurrian Suffixes *-ne/-na* and *-nni/e/-nna*”, in: H.A. Hoffner, Jr. (ed.), *Orient and Occident* [Fs. C.H. Gordon] (AOAT 22), Neukirchen-Vluyn 1973, 43ff.

19. See M. Mayrhofer, “Indo-iranisches Sprachgut aus Alalah”, *Indo-Iranian Journal* 4 (1969) 144ff., and also *id.*, “Der heutige Forschungsstand zu den indoiranischen Sprachresten in Vorderasien”, *ZDMG* 111 (1961) 453ff.

20. As noted by Collon (*The Seal Impressions from Tell Atchana/Alalakh* [AOAT 27], Neukirchen-Vluyn 1975, 171), this royal seal is exclusively used by Ilimilimma himself.

word *ṽadurānni* appears stipulates the penalty in case the wife divorces her husband.<sup>21</sup> The passage (lines 17-23) reads as follows:

*šum-ma* / [Pta]-du-<sup>d</sup>iškur <sup>f</sup>bi-it-ta-ma-al-ki / [i]-zé-er-šu ù i-zi-bu-šu / <sup>(20)</sup> [kù.babbar<sup>(2)</sup>]-pu wa-tu-ra-an-ni-šu / [mi-im-š]u<sup>(7)</sup> mi-nu-um-me-e ú-nu-te.meš-šu / [x x (x)]x a-na é mu-ti-ša / [...]

“If FPN dislikes and leaves PN (her husband), then [the money<sup>(7)</sup>] of his brideprice and all his things [(she will return)] to her husband’s house.”

Although properly transliterated by Wiseman, so far the word spelled *wa-tu-ra-an-ni(-šu)* has been taken neither as Hurrian<sup>22</sup> nor as Akkadian<sup>23</sup>. However, it seems that the scribe of AT 94 understood it as Akkadian proper: he used no gloss to indicate its foreign origin and, more importantly, he affixed the Akkadian pronominal suffix to the word. If this interpretation is correct, we would have here another example of a Hurrian loanword of Indo-Aryan origin into the MB Akkadian of Alalah. If this indeed holds true, the logogram níg.sal.ús.sá attested in two other marriage documents from the same archive of Alalah (AT 92:7,11,22 and AT 93:6) should be read *ṽadurānnu* rather than *terḫatu*.

21. A similar stipulation is attested in another marriage document from Alalah IV, namely AT 92:6-14: [š]um-ma <sup>f</sup>na-i-du <sup>f</sup>i-ri-ḫal-bá i-<sup>r</sup>zé-er<sup>3</sup>-ši / ù uk-ta-na-aš-ši-id-šu níg.sal.ús.sá / ša sal šú-ḫa-ar-ti ik-la mi-nu-um-me mi-im-šu / ša é a-[b]i-ši wa-ad-du-ši i-le-qè ù i-pá-tar / <sup>(10)</sup> šum-ma sal šú-ḫa-ar-ti i-na ap-pí-šu / i-ša-ad-da-ad-ši níg.sal.ús.sá / ú-ta-ar mi-im-mu-ši ša é a-bi-ši / ša ú-še-er-ri-bu wa-ad-du-ši / i-le-qè ù i-pá-at-tar “If PN dislikes FPN and drives her away, then she will keep the brideprice of the bride as well as whatever was assigned to her from her father’s house and leave. Now, if the bride pulls at his nose, then she will return the brideprice but she will keep whatever she brought in from what she was assigned from her father’s house and leave” (for the interpretation, cf. M. Malul, *Studies in Mesopotamian Legal Symbolism* [AOAT 221], Neukirchen-Vluyn 1988, 111f.).

22. Note that it is absent from the list in: A. Draffkorn-Kilmer, *Hurrians and Hurrian at Alalah: An Ethno-linguistic Analysis*, Ph.D. Diss. University of Pennsylvania 1959.

23. The word is not listed in the glossary in: G. Giacomakis, *The Akkadian of Alalah*, The Hague/Paris 1970, nor in *AHw*.