A NOTE ON THE LYCIAN TABAHAZA

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Abstract

In this short text, I examine the usage of the Lycian word tabahaza, highlight its possible Anatolian cognates, such as the Hittite nēpiš- ‘heaven’ and the Cuneiform Luwian tappaš- ‘id.’, analyze and address the problems arising from this connection, while also reconstructing the intermediate phases between Proto-Indo-European, as well as other proto- and attested languages, in relation to the development of the form in question.

Tabahaza, a Lycian hapax, is found on the Xanthos stele (Melchert 2004: 60; 2007):

(TL 44b) 51 se dde tuwetē: kumezija: tere tere
trqañũ: pddatahi: qṁâkba: xrrsěni: eh-
bi: tabahaza: kumezija: padritahi: arĩ-
na tuminehija: kumezija: xâkbija: kume-
ziļja:

‘(…) And he set up altars all over for the local Trqqas (Storm-god), [and he set up] twelve’ altars for the tabahaza in his raging storm [and he set up] in Aphrodision in Xanthos altars for Tymnessos [and] altars for Kandyba (…)’

The first discussion concerning the meaning of tabahaza, as well as an analysis was undertaken by Deecke (1887: 329; 1889: 187), who considered it was a feminine ethnonym from *tabaha, corresponding to Tā邠, a city in Caria. This interpretation

1 It is unclear whether qṁâkba should be connected to tabahaza or kumezija ‘altars’.
2 The translation is mine.
was also followed by Bugge (1898: 232), who translates tabahaza: kumezija: padritahi: as ‘des Pedaritos Mannschaft aus Tabai’. More recently, this ethnonymic reading was also adopted by Neumann (2007: 336–337), who considers tabahaza to be an adjectival attribute to kumezija, the word following it in the text cited above, which is paralleled by tuminehija kumezija and čãkbija kumezija in the subsequent two lines. He additionally introduced a hypothetical *tebehezi ‘Einwohner von *Tebehos, Tebeha, Tabahos’ (2007: 337), a form perhaps connected with the Hitt. Tapasanta; Neumann, nevertheless, does not explain how the two forms, i.e. tabahaza and *tebehezi are related on the vocalic or morphological level. The link to the Hitt. Tapasanta is difficult to endorse in view of the fact that other place-name reflexes end with -nta/-nda, cf. the following examples: the Lyc. χαδαβατι – Καδαβανδα (Melchert 2004: 80; Neumann 2007: 108), the Lyc. wehıṭi – Ωυανδα (with nasal reduction, etymologically *weso + e/ont-, cf. Melchert 2004: 79; Neumann 2007: 423), or the Lyc. isıt[a] – Ἰσινδα (Melchert 2004: 29; Neumann 2007: 155). This ethnonym-denoting suffix is also adopted by Shevoroshkin (1979: 193; 1982: 213), who believes tabahaza is a dative plural, with the meaning ‘to the Himmelbewohner’, which is derived from *tabaha-himmlisch, with the eze/i or -aze/i suffix, cf. e.g., Ikeze/i ‘of Ikos’, Aprilaze/i- ‘of Aperlai’ (Melchert 2004: 28, 4). A similar translation ‘den Himmelsherren’ is favored by Schürr (2003: 110 n. 7), who also traces tabahaza back to *tēbes- (cf. below).

Before suggesting an ethnonymic interpretation, Neumann (1983: 148) examined whether -aza was typical for terms signifying occupations, cf. zxxaza ‘warrior’ from zxxa- ‘to fight’ (Melchert 2004: 89), although Starke (1990: 99 n. 246) doubts the connection between tabahaza and its other Anatolian cognates, such as the CLuw. tappaš-.

It would be difficult to derive the final -aza from -eze/i or -aze/i, as the e/i-stems do not exhibit this ending in any cases4 (the usual forms for the dative plural are -e or -ije, cf. Kloekhorst 2013: 142), so the first “ethnonymic” proposal fails to withstand serious scrutiny. The second suggestion is more plausible, since the -aza suffix forms an a-stem, meaning it can appear as a dative-locative plural in the form tabahaza. The semantic connection, in my opinion, is quite strong – the context describes the building of altars to the main Storm-God, as well as to (maybe twelve) other gods (i.e. those, whose ‘occupation’ is connected to the heavens).

Furthermore, *tabaha- (‘himmlisch’, according to Shevoroshkin 1982) consonantly corresponds appropriately to the CLuw. tappaš-/tapas/, wherein the CLuw. pp /pː/ and the Lyc. b /β/ both come from the PA */b/ (Melchert 1994: 230, 288), as do the CLuw. š /s/ and the Lyc. h /h/ from the PA */s/ (Melchert 1994: 234, 288, cf. also Kloekhorst 2008b: 124). The commonly reconstructed PA form is *nébos (> Hitt. nēpiš), from the PIE *nébʰos (cf. e.g. Kloekhorst 2008a: 697; Beekes 2010: 1012), with the only potential problem regarding tappaš- and *tabaha- being the initial t.

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3 Cf. below for Neumann’s earlier view on the topic.
4 As opposed to e.g. -ija a-stem place-name adjective, similar to those adduced by Neumann (2007: 337), i.e. tuminehija and čãkbija.
5 For the correspondence between the Hitt. ėp and the CLuw. app cf. Čop (1970: 90) (Čop’s Law).
A similar process has occurred in the countries close to the Baltic Sea, cf. the Lith. *debesǐs ‘cloud, the Latv. *debess ‘sky’, but the Pol. *niebo ‘id., all of which come from the same PIE *nébʰos (Smoczyński 2007: 96; Derksen 2015: 118). Another possible alternative would be an analogy with the words for ‘earth’, i.e. the CLuw. *tiywam(i)- and the HLuw. *taskwari(-i), with which ‘sky’ is very often contrasted (found eight and thirteen times in their respective corpora, cf. Nowakowski forthcoming). A similar development can be located in the East Baltic, where the PIE *h₁neun ‘nine’ > the PBS *newin- > the Lith. *devyni, although the OPr. *newints ‘ninth’ maintains the n intact. The d could have arisen by analogy to the word for ‘ten’: the Lith. *dešimt (Smoczyński 2007: 107; Derksen 2015: 126).

Whether we attribute the Luwian and Lycian n > t change to an arbitrary shared innovation (dissimilation caused by the proximity of b) or to leveling by analogy (as described above), it has to be reconstructed for the Proto-Luwic phase (tentatively, however, as there are no attestations of a cognate in Milyan, Carian, Sidetic or Pisidian, from which both Luwian languages, as well as Lycian, emerged (Melchert 2003: 177; Rieken 2017: 302–303). The development could be represented as follows:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{PIE *nébʰos} & \rightarrow \text{PA *nébos} \rightarrow \text{PLuwic *tébes} \rightarrow \text{CLuw. tappaš- /tapas/} \\
& \rightarrow \text{Lyc. tabah-aza /tabahat’s/} \\
\text{PIE *nebʰésos} & \rightarrow \text{PA *nebésos} \rightarrow \text{PLuwic *tebés-} \rightarrow \text{PLuwian *tabás-} \rightarrow \text{HLuw. tipas- /tibas/}
\end{align*}
\]

The problem appears on the vocalic level: the PIE */e/ should produce the Lyc. /e/ (Melchert 1994: 293). The solution resides in the complicated regressive vowel assimilation phenomenon present in the Lycian language – *tabahaza must have come from a hypothetical, unattested *tebeh, wherein both e vowels assimilated to a because of the a-vocalism in the suffix -aza. While generally only a single vowel undergoes this process, an iterative application is also attested (Melchert 1994: 296): Armañene/i-/ > Er’menenẽne/i- ‘brother of the Moon’.

Therefore, the complete development of the Lycian word for ‘heaven’ and ‘gods’ should be reconstructed as follows:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{PIE *nébʰos} & \rightarrow \text{PA *nébos} \rightarrow \text{PLuwic *tébes} \rightarrow \text{Lyc. *tebeh + -aza > tabahaza.}
\end{align*}
\]

Abbreviations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CLuw. = Cuneiform Luwian</th>
<th>Lith. = Lithuanian</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>HLuw. = Hieroglyphic Luwian</td>
<td>Lyc. = Lycian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latv. = Latvian</td>
<td>OPr. = Old Prussian</td>
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6 Cf. above for the *n-b > d-b dissimilation, found in the Lith. *debesίs, as well as, conversely, a *d-m > n-m assimilation, as exemplified by the Lith. *námas ≪ the PBS. *dámus ≪ the PIE. *domos < *dóm (Smoczyński 2007: 416; Derksen 2015: 328).
8 V[-high] > [a back] /_Ca[V[a back], cf. (Melchert 1993: 296).
PA = Proto-Anatolian
PBS = Proto-Balto-Slavic
PIE = Proto-Indo-European

PLuwian = Proto-Luwian
PLuwic = Proto-Luwic
Pol. = Polish

References

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