

# Hurrian Theophoric Names in the Documents from the Hittite Kingdom

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**Abstract:** Hurrian personal names are documented among the members of the Hittite royal family starting from the time of King Tudḫaliya I and they become more and more popular in the 13th century BC. The rulers of polities subordinate to Ḫatti, such as Karkemiš and Amurru, bore Hurrian names. These names were also diffused among the inhabitants of Anatolia and Syria, as the Hittite texts and the tablets discovered at Alalah and Emar demonstrate. The greatest part of the Hurrian names is “Satznamen” in which one of the two components is a divine name. Thus, the name giving process can offer information on the spread of the Hurrian religious tradition in the regions under the Hittite political control.

## 1. Premise

Hurrian personal names only occur in Hittite texts from the end of the 15<sup>th</sup> century BC onward. Although their number increased in the following two centuries, they represent a minority in the Hittite onomasticon (de Martino 2011).

The Hurrian theophoric names that are attested in Ḫatti feature a limited number of deities, such as Teššub, Ḫebat, Šarruma, Nikkal, Kušuḫ, and Šaušga. Here I deal with the names that refer to Teššub, Ḫebat, and Šarruma. The aim of this work is to study the spread of these Hurrian names in the Hittite kingdom from social and diachronic perspectives. The scope of this inquiry is limited by the character of the Hittite textual corpus, which includes only a very few private documents. Hence, most of the people mentioned in the preserved tablets belong to the court and the state administration.

## 2. Names composed with Teššub

Personal names composed with Teššub are the most numerous in the texts from Ḫatti. They are not exclusive to Anatolia; in fact, they are already documented in texts from Middle Bronze Age archives in Syria, such as those of Mari, Tigunani, Tell Shemshara, and Tell Leilan (Richter 2016, 540). Names honouring Teššub were very common in Syria during the Late Bronze Age and are attested in the Amarna letters (Giorgieri 1999), the Emar texts (Pruzsinszky 2003, 227-37), and the Alalah tablets (von Dassow 2008 *passim*).

The oldest Hurrian personal names composed with Teššub and occurring in Hittite texts are Eḫal-Teššub, Eḫalte, and perhaps Agiya. Eḫal-Teššub may be a different spelling for the more common name Eḫli-Teššub. Eḫal-Teššub was an expert in divination (<sup>LU</sup>ḪAL) from Aleppo who is mentioned in some catalogues of tablets (Dardano 2006, 130-31; 152-53; 212-13). The tablet that records the ritual attributed to Eḫal-

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Teššub may have reached Ḫattuša either after the campaigns led by Šuppilulima I in western Syria, as Miller argued (2004, 506 n. 925), or via Kizzuwatna during the reign of Tudḫaliya I/II and his followers.

The hypocoristic form of this name, Eḫalte, is borne by a man from Išmirikka mentioned in the agreement concluded by Arnuwanda I with the people of this country (KUB 23.68+ rev. 13; Beckman 1999, 16-7). The name Agiya occurs in this same text and could be the short form of Agi-Teššub (rev. 19)<sup>1</sup>. Hence, the people who bore these names in the pre-imperial period came either from Syria or from the regions close to Kizzuwatna.

In the 13<sup>th</sup> century BC, personal names composed with Teššub became more numerous and were also borne by members of the Hittite royal house. We recall that Šarri-Teššub is the Hurrian second name of Muwatalli II, and his two sons were named respectively Ulmi-Teššub and Urḫi-Teššub.

Names composed with Teššub were borne by high-ranking officials, such as the royal messengers Teḫi-Teššub and Teli-Teššub. Teḫi-Teššub's father was the scribe Ibizzi, who signed a manuscript of the Poem of Gilgameš that had presumably been translated from Hurrian (Gordin 2015, 228). Teḫi-Teššub also occurs in a sealing from Nišantepe where he bears the title "prince" (Hawkins 2005, 274) and in a letter from Šēh Hamad (Cancik-Kirschbaum 1996, 123-32).

Teli-Teššub is mentioned in the Karnak stele that preserves the Egyptian translation of the treaty concluded between Ramesses II and Ḫattušili III (Pernigotti 2010, 96-105). He was active in Syria, where the tablet RS 17.137 had been sealed by him and his colleague Teḫi-Teššub. On this sealing Teli-Teššub bears the title "messenger whom (the Hittite king) sent to Egypt", and this title demonstrates the importance that he attributed to his diplomatic activities at the pharaonic court (de Martino 2016, 368). The origin of both these officials from a centre in western Syria is likely, given their activity in this region.

Names with Teššub were very popular at Karkemiš. Three kings of Karkemiš in the Late Bronze Age bear names composed with this theonym, namely, Ini-Teššub, Talmi-Teššub, and Kuzi-Teššub. Some royal princes and high-ranking courtiers of this country also have names that refer to the Hurrian Storm-god, such as Ḫešmi-Teššub, Kunti-Teššub, Mutri-Teššub, Uri-Teššub, and Duppi-Teššub (van Soldt 2003; Mora 2004).

Even two kings of Amurru have a Hurrian name composed with Teššub: Ari-Teššub and Duppi-Teššub. The prestige gained by association with the Storm-god of Aleppo surely determined the adoption of personal names composed with this theonym by the ruling family of Karkemiš and Amurru, and by members of the *élites* of these countries. Muwatalli II's preference for Hurrian names composed with Teššub may be due to his devotion to the Storm-god, as well as his fondness for southern Anatolian cultural traditions.

### 3. Names composed with Ḫebat

The goddess Ḫebat, whose name means "the goddess of Aleppo", as Archi argued (1994), was already venerated at Ebla in the 3<sup>rd</sup> millennium BC, as well as at Mari in the 18<sup>th</sup> century BC. The cult of this deity eventually spread all over western Syria, al-

<sup>1</sup> Another personage by the name of Agiya is documented in the deposition text KUB 34.45+ obv. 12', which can be dated to the time before Šuppiluliuma I (de Martino 2011, 75).

though she was not listed in the pantheon of the royal house of Mittanni, nor does her name occur in the official documents issued by Mittanian kings (Archi 1992; 1994; Trémouille 1997). Offerings and celebrations in honour of Ḫebat are included in the program of the main Hittite state festivals, but the cult of this deity was mostly diffused in the region of Kizzuwatna (Trémouille 1997, 79-122).

Personal names composed with Ḫebat are rare in the texts from Mari (Durand 2008, 310) and Alalaḫ VII (Trémouille 1997, 235), but their number increases in the Late Bronze Age documents from western Syria. In addition, two Mittanian princesses bear a Hurrian name composed with Ḫebat, namely, Kelu-Ḫeba, sister of Tušratta, and Tadu-Ḫeba, Tušratta's daughter.

Hittite texts document some feminine names composed with Ḫebat (Zehnder 2010, 81-2). The oldest occurrence of these names presumably dates to the second half of the 15<sup>th</sup> century BC. A woman by the name of Ašmu-Ḫeba occurs in a fragmentary passage in the ritual KBo 15.10+ III 26'. This text records two different rituals for blessing the royal family and securing for them the protection of the gods. In this way the king could counteract the black magic of Ziplantawiya (Christansen 2007). The mention of this woman, who was the sister of Tudḫaliya I, as well as a reference to Tudḫaliya I herself, offers a chronological anchor. A woman by this same name, who bears the title of princess (REX.FILIA), is documented from a sealing from Nišantepe (Herbordt 2005, 116 note 11), but we cannot say whether we are dealing with one and the same person.

A woman named Mušu-Ḫeba is mentioned in the very fragmentary text KUB 34.58+ II 1', which Miller (2013, 154-67) considers to be a document issued on the enthronement of Tudḫaliya II/III. This text also mentions Pariyawatra and Tulbi-Teššub, who were members of the royal family at the time of Arnuwanda I (de Martino 2011, 10-1), and thus Mušu-Ḫeba may indeed have been a royal princess.

As is well known, each of Tudḫaliya II/III's two wives had a Hurrian name composed with Ḫebat: Šadandu-Ḫeba, the king's first wife, and Tadu-Ḫeba (de Martino 2017). We are in the dark about the family origin of these two women, but if we consider that Ḫebat was particularly venerated in Kizzuwatna, it is possible that both came from the "aristocracy" of this country. Feminine names composed with Ḫebat that emulated those of the Mittanian royal princesses may have been diffused among the members of the Kizzuwatnean élite when the region was under Mittanian control.

Documents from various sites mention a woman named Ašnu-Ḫeba. Her name occurs on an inscribed relief found at Alalaḫ that was re-used in the Level IB temple. The relief also portrays and mentions her husband Tudḫaliya, who bears the title "great priest" (von Dassow 2020, 209). In addition, a hieroglyphic sealing found at Alalaḫ (AT 20414) preserves the names of Tudḫaliya, prince, and Ašnu-Ḫebat, princess (Yener, Dinçol, and Peker 2014). Von Dassow (2020, 201) argued that Tudḫaliya might have been appointed by Muršili II to rule Alalaḫ.

Princess Ašnu-Ḫeba may have been the sender of the postscript written to the Hittite queen on the reverse side of the tablet KBo 18.12 (Marizza 2009, 146-47). Although the letter on the tablet's obverse is fragmentary, and neither the sender's name nor that of the receiver are preserved, it has been assumed that the letter was written by Tudḫaliya, the great priest, to the Hittite king (Yener, Dinçol, and Peker 2014). The Syrian greeting formula ("I have fallen at the feet [of my Lady] three times (and) nine times") addressed by Ašnu-Ḫeba to the Hittite queen agrees with the Syrian location where the former resided, but it could also support the assumption that her homeland was a centre such as Alalaḫ or Aleppo. In this case, the high-ranking Hittite official Tudḫaliya may have married a local woman who could have eased his integration into the society of Alalaḫ.

Another Hittite queen whose name incorporates that of *Ḫebat* is *Tanu-Ḫeba*. We argue that she was not the last wife of *Muršili II* (Hawkins 2011, 92-93), but *Muwatalli II*'s spouse (Cammarosano 2010) and *Kuruntiya*'s mother. Texts such as *KBo 6.29+ I 36* and the "Apology" III 40' state that none of the first-rank royal princes was an adult (*huiḫu(i) ššuwalli*) when *Muwatalli II* died (Singer 2002, 744-45; differently Cammarosano 2010, 48-9), and consequently the throne was left to *Urḫi-Teššub*, a second-rank prince. Hence, we assume that *Muwatalli II* married *Tanu-Ḫeba* in the latter part of his reign, presumably after he had transferred the capital to *Tarḫuntašša*, and if this indeed was the case, the king may have wanted to marry a woman from a southern Anatolian family.

Particularly interesting is the woman who bears the Hurro-Luwian name of *Ḫeba-piya* and is mentioned in the tablet *KUB 15.5+*. This document lists several dreams of the king and other members of the court, and *Ḫeba-piya* plays a significant role since she establishes what gifts should be given to the "Great God". According to *Waal* (2015, 391), *Ḫeba-piya* may have been a "dream advisor", while *Mouton* argued that she was a priestess (2007, 25). As for the date of this tablet, *Mouton* (2007, 26) suggested that it could have been written during the reign of *Muršili III* because it mentions the "Great God" to whom this king made the donations that are deplored by *Pudu-Ḫeba* in the well-known letter to *Ramesses II* *KUB 21.38*.

A woman by the name of *Ḫeba-piya* whose dream is mentioned in the oracle fragment *KBo 41.208+ I 14'* (*Tischler* 2019, 673-75) may be identified with the *Ḫeba-piya* of *KUB 15.5+*. In addition, a princess by the name of *Ḫeba-piya* occurs in two sealings from *Tarsus* (*Zehnder* 2010, 156).

The *Kizzuwatnean* origin of *Queen Pudu-Ḫeba* is well known, and she promoted the cult of *Ḫebat* all over *Ḫatti*. Several children born to *Ḫattušili III* and *Pudu-Ḫeba* received a Hurrian name, and one of their daughters was called *Keloš-Ḫeba*. As is well known, she married the king of *Išuwa* (*de Martino* 2010; *Zehnder* 2010, 188-89).

A woman named *Aru-Ḫeba* may have been a member of either the royal family or the court. She is mentioned in *KBo 13.62*, a "school tablet based upon a real letter" (*Hoffner* 2009, 335). The name of the sender is not preserved, and the addressee, who is called "My Lady", may be the Hittite queen *Pudu-Ḫeba*. A passage in this letter (ll. 7-8) refers to a previous message sent by *Aru-Ḫeba* that gave information on the addressee's illness. The tablet is signed by *Šaušga-ziti*, in cuneiform writing, and by *Targašnatalana*, in hieroglyphic characters (*Gordin* 2015, 34; *Torri* 2022, 212). *Šaušga-ziti*'s signature indicates a date in the reign of *Ḫattušili III* (*Marizza* 2009, 174), but the two scribes presumably only produced a copy of the letter. Nevertheless, a date in the reign of *Ḫattušili III* is likely because *Pudu-Ḫeba* is the queen who is most frequently mentioned in the late Hittite texts. *Aru-Ḫeba* must have been very close to the queen if she was well informed about the latter's health.

In conclusion, personal names composed with *Ḫebat* are documented starting from the reign of *Tudḫaliya I* and were borne by four Hittite queens, as well as princesses and other women belonging to the court. As noted above, the deity *Ḫebat* was particularly venerated in *Kizzuwatna*, which was the homeland of *Pudu-Ḫeba*. We assume that *Šadandu-Ḫeba*, *Tadu-Ḫeba*, and *Tanu-Ḫeba* may also have come from this Anatolian region, though we do not have concrete evidence about their origin. They bore the typical Hurrian aristocratic "Satznamen" that the princesses of the royal *Mittanian* family had also borne.

#### 4. Names composed with *Šarruma*

The divine name *Šarruma* occurs in several personal names found mostly in texts that date to the second half of the 13<sup>th</sup> century BC. As is well known, *Šarruma* is very

often associated with Ḫebat (Trémouille 1997, 190) and is considered her son. The Hieroglyphic Luwian inscription Aleppo 1:1, which was issued by Talmi-Šarruma, ruler of Aleppo, states that he erected a temple in Aleppo that was dedicated to the dyad Ḫebat – Šarruma (Laroche 1956). It is not by chance that the ruler of this country and the patron of the inscription each bore a Hurrian name that contained the theonym Šarruma<sup>2</sup> and exalted this deity<sup>3</sup>. Talmi-Šarruma was the son and successor of Telipinu, whom Šuppiluliuma I had appointed as priest in Kizzuwatna according to the decree KUB 19.26.

Thus, the cult of Šarruma may have already been promoted by Telipinu during the early years of the reign of Šuppiluliuma I (Schwemer 2001, 485). After all, the cult of Šarruma was not new at Ḫatti; in fact, some Hurrian and Hurro-Hittite *kaluti*-lists of Teššub and Ḫebat (Schwemer 2001, 485 note 3967; Trémouille 2006, 195 note 5), which are written in a pre-imperial *ductus*, support the assumption that Šarruma had already been an object of devotion, together with Teššub and Ḫebat, in the decades before the reign of Šuppiluliuma I.

As for the etymology of the name Šarruma, and consequently its origin, scholars have often presumed that it is a Hurrian name (Richter 2012, 356). The logographic writing LUGAL-*ma* may indeed recall the Hurrian word *šarri* “king”, which is a loan word from Akkadian, although this logographic writing may just be a «jeux graphique akkadisant», as Laroche argued (1963, 278).

Orthography aside, the assumption of a Hurrian etymology of the name Šarruma finds some support in the fact that the personal names composed with this theonym are all genuine Hurrian “Satznamen”.

In addition, Šarruma is mentioned in several Hurrian texts, for example KBo 20.119 (ChS I 3/2 107), which preserves the *kaluti*-list for the Storm-god of Šapinuwa and refers to Šarruma as “the calf of Teššub” (<sup>U</sup>U=ve AMAR-ti <sup>U</sup>Šarruma, I 14).

Finally, the Hittites themselves considered Šarruma to be a Hurrian god, as indicated by the Hittite text KUB 56.19 (Trémouille 2006, 194; de Martino 2021), which dates to the time of Ḫattušili III and deals with a complicated situation involving the Hittite king and his son, the heir to the throne (II 13-12). The king had installed one of his daughters as a *tabri*-woman and assigned her to the cult of the Storm-god (II 13-14). A serious controversy arose between those who claimed that the princess should be assigned to the Storm-god and those who believed that she should serve Šarruma instead. To solve this problem, Ḫattušili III sent his son to the Ḫurri Land to consult the elders. Hence both Teššub and Šarruma were perceived as Hurrian deities. Despite this inquiry, the matter was not resolved, and when the king died, his son, who had in the meantime ascended to the throne, continued to investigate it. He prayed that the Storm-god give him a sign, in an attempt to avoid any further oracular investigations.

Notwithstanding, a Hurrian analysis of the name Šarruma is morphologically problematic and a Hurrian verb *šarr-* is not documented. Thus, Laroche (1963) had already denied the Hurrian origin of Šarruma and argued that this was a Kizzuwatnean divinity whose cult progressively expanded towards western Syria.

As is well known, the hieroglyphic sign SARMA (in the two variants \*80 and \*81), which was used when writing the god’s name, depicts the lower part of the human body. Hence, a genetic derivation of the theonym Šarruma from the Hittite word *šarra-* “half

<sup>2</sup> According to Miller (2007, 137 note 30), Talmi-Šarruma may also have had a second name: Ḫalbaḫi.

<sup>3</sup> The meaning of this personal name is “Šarruma (is) great”.

part” was argued by Laroche (1963)<sup>4</sup>. Nonetheless, no Luwian term can be connected to a root *šarra*, as far as I know. It is true that the Hieroglyphic script emerged in a mixed Hittite and Luwian environment, as Yakubovich (2010, 285-99) convincingly demonstrated, but if Šarruma indeed was a Luwio-Kizzuwatnean deity, we would expect that its name was either Hurrian or Luwian, and not Hittite. Thus, the shape of the hieroglyphic signs seems to derive from a folk etymology, as Tischler argued (2004, 937-39).

In conclusion, Šarruma may be the indigenous name of a Kizzuwatnean deity, possibly a mountain god, since its connection with the mountains is clearly demonstrated, for example, in the Hayneri relief (Ehringhaus 2005, 76-80). Tischler (2004, 939) assumed that it could be an appellative somehow related to the Akkadian word *šarrum*. Regardless of its etymology, the similarity of the divine name Šarruma with the Hurrian word *šarri-* may have facilitated the Hurrianization not only of the deity’s cult, but also of its name.

The oldest occurrence of a personal name composed with Šarruma can be found in a passage in the Offering List KUB 11.7+ rev. 6 (Carruba 2007, 139-41). A personage by the name of Ašmi-Šarruma is labelled as one of Arnuwanda I’s sons, together with Mannini.

Particularly interesting is the personal name Ilī-Šarruma, which is a *hybrid* name formed with the Akkadian word *ilu(m)*. The bearer of this name is documented in a Hurrian tablet discovered at Kayalıpınar / Şamuḫa (KpT 1.11; Wilhelm 2019, 197-200). He was an official entrusted with a military expedition into western Syria together with his colleague Eḫli-Tenu. The latter bears a Hurrian name composed with the name of the god Tenu, who was Teššub’s vizier. This tablet is dated by G. Wilhelm (2018, 475 note iii) to the reign of Tudḫaliya II/III<sup>5</sup>. We argue that the Hittite king may have chosen two Kizzuwatnean army officers to lead a military expedition into the region of Mukiš.

The prestige gained by Šarruma at the Hittite court is witnessed by the fact that the aforementioned Offering List KUB 11.7+ (Carruba 2008, 139-41) preserves the name of Tulbi-Šarruma, son of Arnuwanda (see the fragment KBo 13.42, 6’). This prince may be one of Arnuwanda II’s sons, because the name of Šuppiluliuma also occurs in this text (van den Hout 1995, 134). Thus, even a grandson of Šuppiluliuma I bore a name derived from the theonym Šarruma.

Personal names composed with Šarruma gained great popularity at the Hittite court during the reign of Ḫattušili III. One of his sons bore the name of Ḫešmi-Šarruma (van den Hout, 127-32), and prince Ewri-Šarruma, who is listed among the witnesses of the treaty concluded by Tudḫaliya IV with Kuruntiya of Tarḫuntašša, may have been another son of Ḫattušili III (de Martino 2011, 38). In addition, Tašmi-Šarruma was the second name of Tudḫaliya IV (Hawkins 2011, 98-9). After all, this god was his protective deity.

Names composed with Šarruma were borne by high-ranking Hittite officials such as Pendi-Šarruma, the sender of the letter RS 94.2523. As is well known, this is the companion message to a letter (RS 94.2530) sent by Šuppiluliuma II to Ammurapi of Ugarit (Lackenbacher, and Malbran-Labat 2016, 24-31). A personage by the name of Pendi-Šarruma also occurs in sealings from Nišantepe, but perhaps he is a homonymous dignitary (Bilgin 2018, 168-70).

<sup>4</sup> See also Jasink 1991, 22.

<sup>5</sup> Differently von Dassow (2020, 203) dates this document to the reign of Tudḫaliya I.

Another official of high rank is Tagi-Šarruma, who is mentioned among the witnesses of the treaty concluded with Kuruntiya and whose name occurs in other documents, as well as in some sealings from Nišantepe. Again, it is not clear whether we are dealing with a single person, or whether there were at least two homonymous officials in the last decades of the 13<sup>th</sup> century BC (Bilgin 2018, 259-62).

Names composed with Šarruma were not restricted to the members of the *élite*; for example, the name of Ewri-Šarruma was borne by a child who belonged to one of the households given by Pudu-Ḫeba to Lelwani (Otten and Souček 1965, 18-9).

With respect to the royal houses of the countries subordinated to Ḫatti, we have already said that the son of Telipinu who succeeded him as ruler of Aleppo had the name Talmi-Šarruma. Prince Teli-Šarruma was one of the sons of the king of Karkemiš, either Šaḫuruwa or Ini-Teššub (Mora 2004, 438; 2008, 560). In addition, Niqmepa, king of Ugarit, and his wife Aḫat-Milku, who was a princess of Amurru, had at least three sons: Ammistamru, who ascended the throne after the death of his father, and his brothers Ḫešmi-Šarruma and ʾR-Šarruma. The latter two names are Hurrian. Ammistamru II married another princess of Amurru, who was the daughter of Bente-šena, and one of their children had the Hurrian name Utri-Šarruma. Liverani (1978, 152) argued that Hurrian names were given by Ugaritic rulers only to those princes who were not destined to become king. Nevertheless, the Hurrian name of the three aforementioned princes may be connected to the fact that they were all sons of a princess of Amurru (Singer 1999, 681 note 254), for the rulers of Amurru after Aziru all bore Hurrian names.

Three kings of the polity of Išuwa had Hurrian names composed with the theonym Šarruma. We argue that the first king of Išuwa was Ḫalbašulubi, who was one of Muršili II's sons (Glocker 2011), and his successors were Ari-Šarruma, Ali-Šarruma, and Eḫli-Šarruma, although it is uncertain whether Ari-Šarruma or Ali-Šarruma ruled first (de Martino 2010; Glocker 211). By choosing Hurrian names composed with Šarruma, the kings of Išuwa may have signalled that they shared the devotion of the Hittite royal house towards this god, although we cannot exclude that the cult of Šarruma may also have reached this eastern Anatolian country.

In other regions of Ḫatti, names composed with Šarruma are documented at Emar (Keli-Šarruma and Teli-Šarruma, see Pruzsinszky 2003, 228; 230), and at Alalah, where the name of Eḫli-Šarruma is borne by a cartwright and a weaver (von Dassow 2008, 434-35).

Finally, theophoric names formed from Šarruma are also documented in Central Anatolia in the Iron Age (Adiego 2019; Simon 2020), as in the case of Wasu-Sarma, king of Tabal and contemporary of Tiglat-Pileser III (Bryce 2012, 143-44). There are no traces of the legacy of this god in western Anatolia (Melchert 2013).

To sum up, Šarruma may have been an indigenous Kizzuwatnean deity. Hurrian personal names composed with Šarruma are documented in Hittite texts from the time of Arnuwanda I, and their number increased during the reign of Ḫattušili III, when they were borne by kings, princes, members of the *élite*, and ordinary people in Anatolia and in the Syrian countries subordinated to Ḫatti.

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