Zalpa self-destructs: A new ending for Zalpa and the Zalpa text

1. Introduction

Improving our understanding of Hittite syntax is not just of interest to linguists, it also helps the interpretation of our texts and leads to a better understanding of Hittite culture and history. I here offer a new analysis of the final sentence of the Zalpa text based on new insights in Hittite Hanging Topics and Left-Dislocations. I argue that the end contains a Hanging Topic (marked bold in 1 and 2):

1 KBo 22.2 rev. 15′ (OH/OS[1], CTH 3)

The king came (back) to Ḫattuša to worship the gods, while he left the old king there (in Zalpa). He (i.e., the old king) went up to the city (saying):

ūk≠ṷa		LUGAL-*uš≠(š)miš*			*kišḫa*
I:NOM≠QUOT		King:NOM.S.C≠your:NOM.S.C			become:1S.NPST
U	**ÉRIN.MEŠ**[2]	***katti≠šmi***	*# nu*	URU-*an*	*ḫarnikta*
but	soldier.PL	with≠their:DAT.PL	CONN	city:ACC.S.C	destroy:3S.PST

"*I* will become your king!" But **the troops with them** (i.e., Zalpa), they destroyed the city.

2 KBo 3.38 + Bo 9511 rev. 31′–32′ (OH/NS)

The king [c]ame (back) to Ḫattuša to worship the gods, while he left the commanders there (in Zalpa). (But first) he sa[id] to the men of the city:

ūk≠ṷa		LUGAL-*uš≠(š)me*[*t*]			*kišḫ*[*a*]*t*
I:NOM≠QUOT		king:NOM.S.C≠your:NOM/ACC.S.N			become:1S.PST
U	**ÉRIN.MEŠ**	⌜***katte***⌝***≠šši***	*# nu*	URU-*LAM*	*E*[*LQ*]*E*
but	soldier.PL	with≠his:DAT.S	CONN	city:ACC.S.M	take:3S.PST

"*I* have become your king!" And **the troops with him**, they t[oo]k the city.

Under this analysis, in the OS version the Hittites do not destroy Zalpa, the troops of Zalpa destroy themselves.

2. Problems with ÉRIN.MEŠ *katti≠šmi* as independent clause

Translations and discussions of the final clauses of the Zalpa text treat ÉRIN.MEŠ *katti≠šmi* (1) as an independent clause that is either part of the preceding direct speech "'I will become your king and the troops (will be) on your side'"[3] or part of the narration, followed by *nu* URU-*an ḫarnikta* "and (the) troops (were) on their side[4], and he destroyed the city"[5]. Both translations,

[1] The discussion about the paleographic dating of this text is ongoing. I do not wish to engage with that debate here, and merely treat KBo 22.2 as older than the MS documents in this study.

[2] Despite the Sumerian plural marker, the word is singular, hence the singular verb in the following clause (Otten 1973: 45).

[3] Holland and Zorman 2007: 40 and Marineau 2020: 214. Given their translation "I will be your king and the troops [are] under me" Holland and Zorman must assume that *katti≠šmi* is a mistake for *katti≠mi.* They leave open the option that "the troops [are] under me" may not belong to the Direct Speech.

[4] *HEG* W 299 and Haas (2006: 26) erroneously use the translation "bei ihm" of the NS copy for the OS copy.

[5] E.g., Otten 1973: 13, 56; Starke 1977: 183; *HW*² Ḫ 324b. Otten (1973: 56) also contemplated „Ich werde euer König und die Truppe(n) bei uns/euch" but considered „Die Truppe <war> bei ihnen" syntactically easier to interpret.

however, lead to referential ambiguity and lack of informativity, while the second translation also leads to ungrammaticality.

2.1 Referential ambiguity

The noun ÉRIN.MEŠ is not accompanied by modifiers that unambiguously identify its referent. This is unexpected, because in this text the troops (and any other nouns for that matter) are otherwise provided with identifying information: in KBo 22.2 rev. 6′ the 100 troops were earlier designated DUMU.MEŠ ^{URU}*Zalpa katti=mmi* 'the sons of Zalpa with me', while in KBo 22.2 rev. 7′ the troops are described as ÉRIN.MEŠ ^{URU}*Zalpa* 'the troops of Zalpa'. If the ÉRIN.MEŠ in our passage were the king's troops, we would at least expect ÉRIN.MEŠ*=YA* 'my troops' in the Direct Speech. And if the troops were the troops of Zalpa, we would have expected ÉRIN.MEŠ*=KUNU* 'your troops'. Alternatively, with ÉRIN.MEŠ as part of the narrative, we would like to have seen either ÉRIN.MEŠ*=ŠU* 'his (i.e., the king's) troops' or ÉRIN.MEŠ*=ŠUNU* 'their troops'. If the absence of the possessive clitics or any other identifying information was deliberate, the narrative itself should provide clues for referent resolution. In this case, given that the royal troops are otherwise never mentioned, the troops are by default the troops of Zalpa[6]. Under the old analysis the old king's message is thus either '*I* will become your king, but (your) troops will side with you' (so he destroyed the city) or '*I* will become your king', but (their) troops side with them, (so he destroyed the city).

2.2 Flouting of Grice's Maxims

Both translations provide a rationale for the destruction of Zalpa, as many scholars have noted (with Holland and Zorman 2007 serving as the prime representative of this group). Yet, there remains a problem. The expression *U* ÉRIN.MEŠ *katti=šmi* as independent clause leads to a flouting of Grice's Maxims of Quantity and Manner (1975: 45–46):

Quantity: Make your contribution as informative as is required (for the current purposes of the exchange).
Manner: 1. Avoid obscurity of expression.
2. Avoid ambiguity.
3. Be brief.
4. Be orderly.

The expression needs somehow to be informative; it needs to add something to the knowledge that the addressee has about the troops. From an Information Structural perspective, the nominal predicate *katti=šmi* 'with you/them (i.e., the people of Zalpa)' is the Focus. That means that *katti=šmi* is a new and relevant piece of information about the troops. It is not clear, though, how the support of the troops of Zalpa for its own people would be new and informative within the narrative. Why would the troops of Zalpa *not* side with its own people? Would a Hittite audience have expected the troops to surrender instead of to side with a population that refuses to surrender (because siding with a *surrendering* population would not warrant destruction), and does the author therefore need to make explicit that the troops remain allied with the *non*-surrendering population? I think that knowledge of the world, past and present, bans this interpretation. One simply does not expect as standard behavior that an army surrenders but that

[6] Starke 1977: 183.

the population it used to protect fights on. 'The troops side with its population' is a pragmatic presupposition (it is part of the common ground between speaker and addressee at the moment of utterance), not an assertion that would make the utterance informative.

In short, the clause in the OS copy is flouting Grice's Maxims of Quantity and Manner: it is both uninformative and referentially ambiguous (see 2.1). On the other hand, the NS copy does not flout the Maxim of Quantity. ÉRIN.MEŠ *katte=šši* 'the troops (are) on his side' can only mean that the troops of Zalpa[7] side with the king, which then allows him to easily take the city. Because the pragmatic presupposition is the expected one, namely that troops support their own people, siding with the king instead is highly informative.

Only Gilan's alternative translation of the OS version "Die Bevölkerung aber war mit ihnen (den Rebellen)" leads to an informative assertion (2015: 188). For him ÉRIN.MEŠ does not denote the troops but the population, and *katti=šmi* does not refer to the population but to the rebels. Now we understand why *U* ÉRIN.MEŠ *katti=šmi* needed to be stated to begin with. After the king's announcement the expectation is compliance. In fact, this is exactly what we see in the fundamentally altered NS copy: *U* ÉRIN.MEŠ *katte=šši* 'And the population (was) on his (i.e., the king's) side'. The king's next act can thus no longer be destruction. One does not destroy a surrendering population, but either accepts them as subordinates or enslaves them. The logical continuation is *nu* URU-*LAM ELQE* 'and so he took the city'. Perhaps the NH scribe found it hard to believe that the troops of a city would destroy their own city, and thus changed the construction to represent an act that was familiar to the Hittites: conquest. The OS copy, of course, does not have *katte=šši* 'with him' but *katti=šmi* 'with them'. Now the population sides with the opposition to the old king, and therefore Zalpa needs to be destroyed.

Gilan's otherwise excellent solution unfortunately falters because of the meaning of ÉRIN.MEŠ as 'population'. Though this meaning is attested for ÉRIN.MEŠ (Gilan 2007: 313 n. 55), in the Zalpa text ÉRIN.MEŠ otherwise means 'troops'[8], whereas 'population, inhabitants' of a city is expressed as LÚ.MEŠ URU-*LIM*[9], LÚ.MEŠ ^{URU}*Zalpa*[10], or DUMU.MEŠ ^{URU}*Zalpa*[11].

2.3 Ungrammaticality

There is one more issue with *U* ÉRIN.MEŠ *katti=šmi* 'but (their) troops side with them' as an independent clause. The non-expression of the verb 'to be' is ungrammatical because it is never left unexpressed in the past tense[12]. To remain grammatical, expression of *ēšta* would have been necessary, compare the fully spelled-out clause in the Illuyanka Myth:

3 KUB 17.5 i 18′ (OH/NS, CTH 321)
The Stormgod came and killed Illuyanka.

DINGIR.MEŠ-*š=a*	*katti=šši*	***ešer***
god.PL-NOM.PL.C=CONJ	with=his:DAT.S	be:3PL.PST

[7] Again, the troops do not refer to the troops of the king. Why would any Hittite need to be reminded that a king on the war path would be accompanied by his troops?
[8] KBo 22.2 rev. 6′, 8′.
[9] KBo 22.2 obv. 10, 12, rev. 12′, KBo 3.38 + Bo 9511 rev. 29′, 31′.
[10] KBo 3.38 obv. 18′, rev. 20′.
[11] KBo 22.2 rev. 6′, KBo 3.38 rev. 21′.
[12] Hoffner and Melchert 2008: 306.

And the gods **were** on his side.

To avoid ungrammaticality, we would have to interpret *U* ÉRIN.MEŠ *katti≠šmi* as in the present tense, and then assume that this present tense in an otherwise past tense narrative highlights the durative or habitual aspect of the situation. This in fact exacerbates the flouting of Grice's Maxim of Quantity (and Manner) discussed above. What is so incredibly special about the siding of the troops of Zalpa with the people of Zalpa that this not only needs to be mentioned, but that it needs to be in the present tense? If the flouting of the Maxims is deliberate, what is the covert, implied meaning that the audience is expected to find here, in a narrative that is otherwise quite descriptive and explicit?

2.4 A way out: Hanging Topics

All issues—referential ambiguity, un-informativity, ungrammaticality—are resolved if we understand ÉRIN.MEŠ *katti≠šmi* as a Hanging Topic 'the troops with them'[13] that is resumed as the subject of the next clause 'they destroyed the city', compare:

4 KBo 8.35 ii 30′–31′ (MH/MS, CTH 139)

^{m}*Pīyaš*	^{m}*Šunupaššiš*	5 LÚ.MEŠ	***katti≠šmi***	^{URU}*Talmaliyaš*
P.:NOM.S	Š.:NOM.S	5 man.PL	with≠their:DAT.S	T.:GEN.S
nu≠za	*linkiya*	*takšulaš*	*uttar*	
CONN≠REFL	oath:DAT.S	treaty:GEN.S	word:NOM/ACC.S.N	
kattan	*QĀTAMMA≠pat*		*daiēr*	
under	likewise≠FOC	put:3PL.NPST		

(As for) Piya, Šunupašši, (and) five men **with them** from Talmaliya, they put the text of the treaty under oath exactly like that.

With 'But as for the troops on their side, they destroyed the city' the referential ambiguity is resolved because the phrase now explicitly refers to the troops of Zalpa. There is no longer an issue with the tense of 'to be' because there is no longer an independent clause. And finally, no Maxims are flouted. The clause with the Hanging Topic is descriptive and explicit, highly informative, and quite unexpected: Zalpa self-destructs. This new reading confirms Marineau's (2020: 216) view that Zalpa destroyed itself.

3. Hanging Topics in Hittite

Recent advances in the study of Hittite sentence structure have shown that what is generally called *left-dislocation* needs to receive a different interpretation. According to Vai (2011), Motter (2023: 124–132) and Goedegebuure (fc.), all instances listed in Hoffner and Melchert 2008: 408–409 should be considered Hanging Topics[14] (HT). The term Left-dislocation (LD) should be reserved for the Old Hittite left-dislocated noun phrases introduced by *kuid≠a* 'but as for' (Goedegebuure fc.). I first discuss the syntactic status, form, and function of HTs, then illustrate HTs in Old Hittite before moving on to HTs in the Zalpa text.

[13] It also explains why the Neo-Hittite scribe did not take the clause as part of the Direct Speech. He recognized the Hanging Topic.

[14] For a not necessarily complete list of Hanging Topics, see Motter 2023: 280–287.

3.1 Syntactic Status, Form, and Function of HTs

The syntactic status of HTs as independent or dependent on the following clause is under debate: are HTs part of the left periphery of the clause or not? This linguistic debate with its conflicting views has immediate consequences for Hittite syntax: the Hittite left periphery of the clause is currently a messy business as there is no agreement on what can occur in the left periphery. Is the left periphery, for example, the site of HTs[15], and within dependent clauses the site of conditional subordinators *takku* and *mān*, the temporal subordinator *maḫḫan* and conditional relative *kui-*, or does the left periphery also host dependent and relative clauses themselves, following Sideltsev (2023)[16]? Motter (2023, especially pp. 211–225) rather analyzes relative clauses *not* as part of the left periphery but instead as HTs, which are paratactically adjoined to the following clause. There are good reasons to accept this for HTs in general[17].

Irrespective of whether HTs are part of the left periphery of the clause or not, several of the formal characteristics of HTs as summarized by proponents of either view, e.g., Cinque (1997: 96), Beninca' and Poletto (2004: 64–66) and Lopéz (2016: 405–406) are still a valid means of identifying HTs (and distinguishing them from LDs[18]). HTs have at least the following formal properties:

1. HTs are either not marked for case or appear in a default case.
2. HTs are not sensitive to island-constraints.[19]
3. HTs do not adhere to the binding principles.[20]
4. There is only one HT per clause.
5. The correlate (= resumptive element) of the HT can take any form: clitic, tonic pronoun, noun, epithet.

As for their function, HTs draw attention to its referent(s) as a new topic for further discussion, while the referents of LDs are contrastive topics[21]. The referents of HTs are regularly discourse-new, though they do not have to be. When they are discourse-new, referents of HTs are either familiar or inferable. This is the case in 5 where the discourse-new HT is related to the discourse participant (Keizer 2020: 105–106) and 6 where the HT is both discourse-new and familiar (because of the personal name) (Grohmann 2003: 144):

5 My daughter, Leila, who is eighteen, she came home all excited.

6 Q: Wen hast du gestern getroffen?

[15] Hoffner and Melchert 2008: 408–409; Vai 2011.
[16] According to Sideltsev (2023) relative clauses may also occur in Spec,FinP.
[17] See, e.g., Cinque 1997 [1983], Keizer 2020, Villa-García 2023. Others locate HTs in the left periphery, e.g. Beninca' and Poletto 2004.
[18] I use LD (= D-type) as shorthand for Germanic-type Contrastive Left Dislocation (CLD) and Romance-type Clitic Left Dislocation (CLLD).
[19] Cinque 1997: 96. As Motter (2023: 131) notes, sensitivity to island constraints could be relevant for Hittite, but we do not have the data to test this.
[20] Cinque 1997: 102. Motter (2023: 119–120) provides some evidence that relative clauses do not reconstruct. Since he treats relative clauses as HTs, HT's therefore do not reconstruct and therefore do not adhere to the binding principles.
[21] 'Contrast' is understood here as 'evoking a set of alternatives' (see López 2016: 415 with further references). It does not necessarily indicate contrastive actions, though Contrastive Topics often occur in such an environment.

A: Der Martin, *den* habe ich gestern getroffen.

Compare 6 with the following Spanish context in which the CLLDs *a Juan* and *a Pedro* are contrastive topics (Arregi 2003: 32):

7 Q: ¿A quien le diste que regalo?
To who him you-gave which gift
'Who did you give which gift?'

A: A Juan, le di la moto, y a Pedro, le di el libro.
To Juan him I-gave the bike and to Pedro him I-gave the book
'Juan, I gave the bike, and Pedro, I gave the book.'

The following German example illustrates the core function of HT with a discourse-old referent: topic promotion without contrast (Frey 2004: 218). Though the referent of *der Hans* is discourse-old, it is not in the focus of attention and cannot be expressed as a pronoun (8b). Hans must first be promoted to topic-hood to allow that, and this is done by means of an HT (8a).

8 Maria wird morgen mit Hans nach Paris fahren
a. *Der Hans*, er ist sehr zerstreut in letzter Zeit
b. *Er ist sehr zerstreut in letzter Zeit

3.2 HTs in Old Hittite

Old Hittite compositions exhibit both HTs and LDs. The presence of the discourse connectives *nu* or *š(u)-* or a lexeme followed by Wackernagel clitics assures that they are indeed outside the main clause and not merely topicalized. HTs occur in the nominative only while their correlate may appear in any case[22]. LDs consist of *kuid=a* followed by an NP agreeing in case with its correlate in the resumptive clause (Goedegebuure fc.).

Motter (2023: 128–130) treats the *kuid=a* LD as HT because case matching does not entail that syntactic case is assigned (though case mismatch means that syntactic case is not assigned). I argue instead that Hittite HTs and LDs not only differ formally but also functionally. This double difference warrants keeping the two constructions apart. *kuid=a* LDs introduce Contrastive Topics: they always refer to a member of a set of alternatives and have another member or members of that set nearby (for all attestations see Goedegebuure fc.). This is not the case for HTs. Here we see discourse-new referents without an antecedent set to which the referent could belong.

Besides the two HTs in the Zalpa text (see section 4), I am currently aware of four, perhaps five instances of HTs in OH compositions[23]. There is only one instance where the case of HT is unequivocally different from the case of the correlate:

9 KUB 17.10 iii 1 (OH/MS, CTH 324)

[22] Motter (2023: 280–287) lists all HTs known to him. Covering all language stages, he provides more examples with the HT in the nominative and the correlate in a different case.
[23] Motter (2023: 280–287) recognizes four of them: ex. 9, 10, 11, 13.

Kammarušepa saw him (i.e., angry Telipinu). She moved the wing of the eagle […] and stopped him.
§ *karpiš* # *n=an* *arāet*
anger:NOM.S.C CONN=3S.ACC.C stop:3S.PST
Anger, she stopped it. ([She stopped] wrath, she stopped [sin], she stopped sullenness)

Anger is not part of an alternative set: Telipinu and *anger* do not form a set like Juan and Pedro in 7. What we see here instead is the shift to a new topic: all the forms of the deity's anger that need to be stopped. This shift from deity to anger is marked by an HT; a *kuid=a* LD would have been inappropriate.

In one case the HT is spelled with a case-unmarked Sumerogram while its correlate is a dative. Though indirect objects may be expressed by formally case-unmarked Sumerograms, this seems to be quite rare (Cajnko 2017: 196). I therefore take 5 ŠEŠ.MEŠ=*ŠU* as unmarked nominative.

10 KBo 3.1 ii 13 (OH/NS, CTH 19)
Huzziya would have killed them (i.e., Telipinu and Istapariya), but the matter became known, and Telipinu chased them (i.e., Huzziya and his co-conspirator Zuru) away.
5 ŠEŠ.MEŠ=*ŠU* # *nu=šmaš* É.MEŠ *taggašta*
5 brother.PL=his CONN=3PL.DAT house.PL allot:3S.PST
His five brothers, he fashioned houses for them.

The HT is discourse-new. An antecedent set to which the referents could belong is absent. The only antecedent set might have been Huzziya and his co-conspirator, not Huzziya's family (unless Zuru was a family member, which we do not know). The HT is more like 5, i.e., related to a discourse participant.

The nominative-accusative neuter HT in 11 does not have a resumption but would presumably have needed a dative-locative. However, dative clitics referring to non-central syntactic roles do not occur (Widmer 2012: 324).

11 KBo 3.34 ii 29 (OH/NS, CTH 8)
But as for their young chariot-fighters, Išpudaš-Inar oversees them.
(29) GI-*an* ^{GIŠ}UMBIN *ḫašḫaššuar* ^{GIŠ}PAN! *appātar*
arrow-GEN.PL umbin.tool polishing:NOM/ACC.S.N bow holding:NOM/ACC.S.N
# *n=uš* *apāš* *annanut*
CONN=3PL.ACC 3:NOM.S.C train:3S.PST
The polishing of the arrows, the holding (of) the bow, it is *he* who trained them (in it).

The HT is discourse-new. Since this is also the first moment that the training of the young chariot fighters is mentioned, there is no antecedent set to which the referents of the HT could belong. The situation is similar to 9: there the topic shifted from Telipinu to anger, here from the chariot fighters to their skill set.

There is one final, reasonably assured HT. The case of the HT is nom.pl.c., but since transitive subjects do not allow subject clitics, there is no correlative. Regarding its function, large sections

of this text are missing. It is therefore not possible to establish the discourse status of the referent of the HT:

12 KBo 20.26 iii 18′ (OH/OS[?], CTH 627)
§ [[LÚ.MEŠ]]*ḫāpieš* # *karū=maš* *tarkuanzi*
ḫ.:NOM.PL.C already=3PL.DAT twirl:3PL.NPST
The *ḫ.*-personnel, they are already twirling for them.

The last OH example is ambiguous. The correlate *apātt=a* functions as accusative object, but since the extra-clausal constituent is a neuter nominative-accusative, there are no formal means to distinguish between case agreement and lack thereof:

13 KUB 30.11 + KUB 31.135 obv. 11′-12′ (OH/MS, CTH 374)
[Only?] *you*, (O Sungod,) arbitrate the case of the dog (and) the pig.
§ *šuppalann=a* *ḫannešša* *iššit* *kui*[*ē*]*š* *UL* *memiškanz*[*i*]
Livestock:GEN.PL=also case:NOM/ACC.S.N mouth:INST who:NOM.PL.C not speak:ITER:3PL.NPST
(12′)# *apātt=a* *ḫan*[*n*]*attari*
that:ACC.S.N=also judge:2S.MID.NPST
§ Also, the case of the livestock who do not speak with the mouth, that too you arbitrate.
(Also, only *you*, O Sungod, arbitrate the case of the bad, evil person.)

The lack of *kuid=a* would argue for HT, but it is also possible that the loss of *kuid=a* already started in OH. I suggest that we are indeed dealing with the successor to the *kuid=a* LD given that the HT *the case of the livestock* is part of the set of cases that the Sungod arbitrates. As we have seen, such set membership does not occur with HTs.

Thus, the LD in 13 simply functions like a typical MH LD, compare the HT in 14 and LD in 15, both from the same text:

14 KBo 15.10 i 13-14 (MH/MS ritual, CTH 443)
She takes one (of the) *kurdali*-vessel of dough with tongues and says as follows:
kē=wa *idālauēš* (14) [o-]*ešiyanteš* EME.ḪI.A
1DEM:NOM.PL.C=QUOT evil:NOM.PL.C ?: NOM.PL.C tongue.PL
iššišta=ma=aš [f]*Ziplantawi*[*yaš*]
make:3S.PST=but=3ACC.PL.C Z.
These evil […]… tongues, Ziplantawi[ya] has made them.

The HT *these evil … tongues* is both discourse-new and not part of an antecedent set. In this ritual there is however another vessel, with bewitched tongues. That means that when that vessel is introduced as a topic for further comment, an overt contrast is set up with the first vessel. This no longer warrants the use of a HT. Indeed, this time the extra-clausal constituent contains the adversative conjunction *-ma*, is marked for the dative-locative and even contains the sentence particle *-šan*:

15 KBo 15.10 i 29
⌜*ANA* 1⌝ *kurta*⌜*li=ma=ššan*⌝ *QADU* EME.ḪI.A # *nu=ššan* *šer* Ì LÀL *laḫ*[*ui*]
on 1 *k.*-vessel=but=LOC with tongue.PL # CONN=LOC on oil honey pour:3S.NPST

But on the other (lit. one) vessel with tongues, she pou[rs] oil (and) honey on (it) (and says as follows: "Look, the evil bewitched tongues that Zi. made, we have just placed them in the honey.)

To summarize, the OH HTs conform to the criteria listed in section 3.1. There is no evidence that they do not take default nominative case. The resumption agrees in gender and number, but not necessarily in case. Their referents are discourse-new, but if not, the referent requires reactivation (9). Finally, they express a mere topic shift without contrast.

4. HTs in the Zalpa text

The Zalpa text contains two HTs, increasing the OH set of HTs by 50%. One is proposed here (18), while the other (17) one was correctly identified in the *editio princeps* (17a, Otten 1973: 11, followed by Haas (2006: 26)) but interpreted differently by Holland and Zorman (b, 2007: 39, followed by the CHD Š 520b (erroneously introducing past tenses)), Goedegebuure (c, 2014: 129), and Gilan (d, 2015: 187):

17 KBo 22.2 rev. 6′

Happi said to the people of Zalpa: "I am not in good standing with my father, so I went to Ḫattuša to die.

Ù	DUMU.MEŠ	^{URU}*Zalpa*	*katti=mmi*	# 1 *ME*	ÉRIN.MEŠ-*za*	*ea*	*natta*
But	son.PL	Z.	with=my:DAT.S	# 100	troop:NOM.S.C=but	there	not

a "und die Einwohner von Zalpa bei mir, (sind) das nicht einhundert Mann, …"

b "and the people of Zalpa with me. And 100 troops - are they not? (—would they not have died?)"

c "But (were) the sons of Zalpa, a hundred troops, not there (in Ḫattuša) with me?"

d "Und die Zalpäer (waren) mit mir, hundert Mann, nicht war?"

e But the people of Zalpa with me, (are there) not a hundred troops there?

As explained above, all translations of nominal clauses with past tense without expression of the copula need to be rejected. Holland and Zorman's translation would have been possible if it were not for the presence of *-a/-ma* in ÉRIN.MEŠ-*za.* The expected OS nom.s.c. of ÉRIN.MEŠ is ÉRIN.MEŠ-*az*, not ÉRIN.MEŠ-*za.* It has not been noted before that the final *-a* needs to be explained as the adversative connective *-a/-ma*[24]. This connective often marks a topic shift, implying that the troops and the people of Zalpa are not the same. To preserve their co-referentiality, *U* DUMU.MEŠ ^{URU}*Zalpa katti=mmi* can only be an extra-clausal constituent (compare 14 for another instance of *-a/-ma* in the resumptive clause). "The people of Zalpa with me" are not part of a set of alternatives but are merely a new topic. Thus, we are dealing with an HT (e).

18 KBo 22.2 rev. 15′

He (i.e., the old king) went up to the city (saying): "*I* will become your king!"

U	ÉRIN.MEŠ	*katti=šmi*	# *nu*	URU-*an*	*ḫarnikta*
but	soldier.PL	with=their:DAT.PL	CONN	city:ACC.S.C	destroy:3S.PST

[24] I am most grateful to Craig Melchert for providing me with another instance of *-a/-ma* after *-az*, namely KASKAL-*za* in KBo 3.22 rev. 58.

But the troops with them, they destroyed the city.

Again, “the troops with them” are not a member of a set of alternatives: “the troops with them” and the “old king” do not form a set. The HT merely indicates a topic-shift. The presence of HT in 17 does not change our understanding of the text, but the “new” HT in 18 has important historical implications. Zalpa is not destroyed by a Hittite king, but by its own troops. To my knowledge only Marineau (2020: 216) has argued for this, based on his view that the old king should be a vassal king of Zalpa[25].

Marineau suggests that Zalpa’s destruction is an ultimate form of surrender. This is certainly possible, although I would rather argue that it is a scorched earth strategy, an extreme form of resistance to Hittite rule. It would be in line with the rest of the historical narrative, which shows how the rulers of Zalpa and the people of Zalpa defy the Hittites whenever possible. The first act of defiance in the fully preserved historical part (there are more in the badly damaged part of the composition) is Happi’s triumphant claim that he did not die despite his father’s dislike for him, and the implication that the Hittites will not follow up on disobedience or rebellion (see 17). Of course, the Hittite king does not let this pass and besieges Zalpa in order to retrieve Happi and his co-conspirator Tabarna. But instead of handing them over, the people of Zalpa rather kill them (Marineau 2020: 213–214). And when the old king proclaims himself king over Zalpa in response, they rather destroy themselves than obey.

Though I argued here that the endings of Zalpa and the Zalpa text have changed, Holland’s and Zorman’s assessment holds: “There can be no doubt that the characters of the Zalpa tale deliberately opposed the commandments of the Hittite code of conduct: the elder brothers could have heeded the warning of the youngest one and renounced their marriages, and in the course of the long siege the citizens could have surrendered the rebels. … The continued reading of the Zalpa text would have served as a reminder that rules can not be broken without punishment” (2007: 107–108). I would add that the new ending emphasizes that breaking the rules leads to *self-inflicted* punishment.

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Abb: HEG, HW2

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[25] I follow Burgin fc. who argues that the old king is Labarna I.

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