



IX. ULUSLARARASI HİTİTOLOJİ KONGRESİ BİLDİRİLERİ

Çorum 08-14 Eylül 2014

*Acts of the IXth International
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DIFFERENCES BETWEEN PROSE AND POETIC STYLE IN THE HITTITE LANGUAGE

Rita FRANCIA*

What characterizes prose text, and how is it different from poetry? And, most importantly, is there a clear distinction between prose and poetry?

In a *literary* text (in the proper sense of the term) the dominant function of language is always poetic; although the referential, the conative and the emotive functions are also usually present.

The writer is mainly interested in the message itself. It would be inaccurate to mark a sharp divide between a work in prose and one in poetry.

A good example of this is the opening line of perhaps the most famous Italian novel, *I Promessi Sposi* (*The Betrothed*) by Alessandro Manzoni:

Quel ramo del lago di Como, che volge a mezzogiorno, tra due catene non interrotte di monti, tutto a seni e a golfi, a seconda dello sporgere e del rientrare di quelli, vien, quasi ad un tratto, a restringersi....

G. Leech identifies the distinction between poetic language from prose in three main elements:

1. repetition and parallelism which includes words and repeated sounds (anaphora, alliteration, assonance, rhyme etc.), semantic fields;
2. deviation from the common language and uses archaic or invented words, infringement the rules of grammar, spelling unusual;
3. creativity through imagery, polysemy, ambiguity.¹

* 'Sapienza' - Rome

1 *A Linguistic Guide to English Poetry*, Longman, London-New York 1969, pp. 10-12.

Nursery rhymes belong to a literary genre that share characteristics typical of folk poetry: they are written in poetic language (the connotative level overrides the denotative and they contain many rhetorical-rhythmic artifices) so as to be easily memorized, repeated and passed down orally:

*Ninna nanna, ninna oh,
questo bimbo a chi lo do?
Lo darò alla Befana
Che lo tiene una settimana
Lo darò al lupo Nero
Che lo tiene un anno intero
Lo darò al lupo Bianco
Che le tiene finché è stanco*

/&/&/&/&/&/&/&/&/&/&/&/&/&/&/&/&

*Ladybug ladybug fly away home,
Your house in on fire and your children are gone,
All except one and that's little Ann,
For she crept under the frying pan.*

The most useful rhetorical devices for memorizing and transmitting a text orally - alliteration and rhyme - are employed in these examples, both in English and Italian.

In Hittite documents, the same differences between texts with a predominantly denotative level of meaning (non-literary texts) and those with a principally connotative level of language (high literature in prose and poetry) can likewise be found.

In Hittite Rituals there are parts of text with a descriptive function (prose) and parts that provide recitative passages (spells, incantations, *historiolae*) that must be remembered to be passed down orally. To this end, rhetorical-rhythmic devices and “poetic” techniques common to all oral folk literature are employed; for example, the formulaic poetry of the Homeric epics and the *Carmen* in archaic Latin.²

2 C. De Meo, *Gli Stili del Latino*. Bologna 1986, p. 139.

In the following analysis, we examine several passages from different genres - a treaty, an edict and a ritual (one from a descriptive section and one from a *historiola*). Individual sentences will be analyzed so that any rhetorical figures are highlighted. Accadograms and Sumerograms will be omitted, where possible, and replaced with the corresponding Hittite word.

From the treaty between Muwatalli and Alakšandu of Wiluša (CTH 76):³

A III (44) *nam-ma-ta*^D UTU^{ŠI} *ku-e* KUR.KUR^{MEŠ} *AD-DIN* (45) *pa-ra-[(a)]-ma-kán ku-e* ZAG^{Hl.A} ŠA KUR^{URU} *Ḫa-at-ti a-ša-an-zi* (46) *nu ma-a-an*^{LU} KÚR *ku-iš-ki ni-ni-ik-ta-ri na-aš a-pí-e-da-aš A-NA* ZAG^{Hl.A} (47) *GUL-aḫ-ḫu-wa-an-zi pa-iz-zi zi-ik-ma iš-ta-ma-aš-ti* (48) *nu-kán ŠÀ* KUR^{TI} *ku-iš BE-LU nu-uš-ši [p]é-ra-an pa-ra-a Ú-UL ḫa-at-ra-a-ši* (49) *zi-iq-qa Ú-UL wa-ar-ri-eš-ša-at-ti nu-kán ḪUL-la-u-i* (50) *ʿpaʿ-ra-a uš-ki-ši*

“Furthermore, the lands which I, My Majesty, have given to you, and which constitute the border districts of Hatti – if some enemy mobilizes and goes to attack those border districts, and you hear about it and do not write in advance to the one who is commander in the land, and do not lend assistance, but ignore the evil”

- (A) A III (44) *namma-ta *ištanuš-miš kue utnē peḫḫun*
- (B) (45) *par[(ā)]-ma-kan kue irḫuš ŠA KUR^{URU} Ḫatti ašanzi*
- (C) (46) *nu mān kuiški kururaš niniktari*
- (D) *nu-aš apēdaš irhaš* (47) *walahḫuwanzi paizzi*
- (E) *zik-ma ištamašti*
- (F) (48) *nu-kan utni andan kuiš išḫi*
- (G) *nu-ši [p]eran parā natta ḫatrāši*
- (H) (49) *ziqqa natta warreššatti*
- (I) *nu-kan idalau* (50) *ʿpaʿrā uškiši*

In this passage, no rhythmic patterns can be found. All of the figures of speech that would serve this purpose, for example, alliteration or homeoteleuton, are

3 J. Friedrich, *Staatsverträge des Hatti-Reiches in hethitischer Sprache*, 2. Teil, Leipzig 1930, pp. 42-102.

lacking. There are some repeated endings: -ZI in (B) with ‘and (D), -TI in (E) and (H), -ŠI in (G) and (I)’ (in (B) and (D), -TI in (E) and (H), -ŠI in (G) and (I)), but they cannot be considered homeoteleuton in the proper sense of the term because the context of a rhetorically developed text is missing.

Now let’s examine a passage from “The Edict of Queen Ašmunikal on Royal Mausoleum” (CTH 252):⁴

Vs. (1) *UM-MA*^{MUNUS} *Aš-mu-*^D *NIN.GAL MUNUS.LUGAL.GAL É.NA₄-aš ku-it*
i-ia-u-e-en (2) *nu A-NA É.NA₄^{NI} ku-i-e-eš URU^{HIA} pí-ia-an-te-eš*^{LÚ.MEŠ} *BE-EL*
QA-TI ku-i-e-eš pí-ia-an-te-eš (3) *APIN.LÁ*^{LÚ.MEŠ} *SIPAD GU₄*^{LÚ.MEŠ} *SIPAD*
UDU ku-i-e-eš pí-ia-an-te-eš (4) *ša-ri-⟨ku-⟩wa-za-kán ku-i-e-eš da-an-*
te-eš na-at QA-DU É^{MEŠ} *-ŠU-NU URU^{HIA} -ŠU-NU A-NA É.NA₄ pí-ia-an-te-eš*
^{LÚ.MEŠ} *hi-lam-mi-e-eš-ša ku-i-e-eš ka-ru-ú* (6) *A-NA É.NA₄ pí-ia-an-te-eš na-*
at-kán ša-aḫ-ḫa-na-za lu-zi-ia-za a-ra-u-e-eš a-ša-an-du (7) *UR.GI₇-aš wa-ap-*
pí-ia-zi a-pí-ia-ma-aš a-ri na-aš ka-ru-uš-ši-ia-zi (8) *Ì-an-ma-kán la-ḫu-uf-ta-ri*
a-pu-uš-ma-kán pa-ra-a li-e ú-wa-an-zi (9) *nu-uš-ma-aš-kán pí-an*^{GIŠ} *e-ia-an ar-ta-*
ru pa-ra-a-ma-aš-kán lé-e ku-iš-ki tar-na-i (10) *GU₄^{HIA}-ia-aš-ma-aš UDU^{HIA} lé-e*
ku-iš-ki ap-pát-ri-ia-zi (11) *na-at-kán ḫu-u-ma-an-ta-za a-ra-u-e-eš a-ša-an-du*

“As follows the queen Ašmunikal: Regarding the House of Stone that we did, the villages which (have been) given to the House of Stone, the workmen who have (been given), the ploughmen, ox-herders and shepherds who (have been) given, those who have been taken from the soldiers-šarikuwa that (have been) given to the House of Stone along with their homes and their villages, as well as the doormen that (have) long (been) given to the House of Stone, should be free of duties and taxes” .

(A) (1) *UMMA*^{MUNUS} *Ašmunikal šallaš ḫaššuššaraš*

(B) *É.NA₄-aš kuit iyauēn*

4 H. Otten, *Hethitische Totenrituale*, Berlin 1958, p. 106.

- (C) (2) *nu A-NA É.NA₄^{NI} kuiēš ḥappireš piyanteš*
- (D) *kiššeraš antuḥšeš kuiēš piyanteš*
- (E) (3) ^{LÚ.MEŠ} APIN.LÁ ^{LÚ.MEŠ} SIPAD **kuwauwaš* ^{LÚ.MEŠ} SIPAD **ḥāwaš?*
kuiēš piyanteš
- (F) (4) ^{LÚ.MEŠ} *šariḵuḡwaza-kan kuiēš danteš*
- (G) *n-at parnaza-šmet ḥappiraz-šmet A-NA É.NA₄ piyanteš*
- (H) ^{LÚ.MEŠ} *ḥilamēšša kuiēš karū* (6) *A-NA É.NA₄ piyanteš*
- (I) *n-at-kan šaḥḥanaza luzziyaza arauēš ašandu*

The text opens with a queen's speech listing what has been donated in favor of the "house of stone," naming villages and men responsible for various jobs, and specifying that all are free from taxation. The list is expressed with relative clauses and the related verb is expressed by the participle. From a rhetorical standpoint, one notices the epistrophe in the repetition of the verb *pianteš* in (C), (D), (E), (G) and (H), but given the content and the intent of the text, it could not have been expressed in an different way. No other figure of speech can be identified, neither in the signifier nor the signified, that would indicate the use of poetic device. Alliteration, repetition, homeoteleuton, anaphora or other figures of speech that occur abundantly in other kinds of text that we define as "poetic," are missing here; rhythm is totally absent.

Instead, lines 7-8 of the tablet are completely different, rhetorically speaking, from the rest of the text. Here, a proverb or something similar, is quoted that serves to emphasize the special status of the personnel of the mausoleum. For this purpose an *eja*-tree must be planted in front of their homes as a visible sign of their rank and the exemptions that they are offered. Even at first glance, these lines appear stylistically different from what precedes them and from what follows:

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|----------------------------|
| (7) <i>kuwaš wappiyazi</i> | “The dog barks, |
| <i>apiya-ma-aš ari</i> | but it will get there |
| <i>n-aš karuššiyazi</i> | and it will be silent; |
| (8) <i>šagan-ma-kan laḥuttari</i> | the oil will be poured, |
| <i>apuš-ma-kan parā lē uwanzi</i> | but they must not go out.” |

Although there are only five clauses, some features are evident that distinguish this part or these words from the rest of the text. This small “composition” of five clauses, or more precisely verses (where one clause corresponds to one verse), perhaps a proverb or the beginning of a poem or a saying, was certainly known by the audience to which it is directed. The first four verses consist of two units; the fifth verse contains three (if *parā* is considered part of the verb) or four units (if not). The poetic device of homeoteleuton is clearly visible, or rather, alternating rhyme between the first and third verses and the second and fourth (*ZI – RI – ZI - RI*). In addition, the choice and arrangement of words is not accidental; instead, the number of syllables is also taken into account. The first three verses follow this scheme:

<i>kuwaš</i>	<i>wappiyazi</i>
2	4
<i>apiya-ma-aš</i>	<i>ari</i>
5	2
<i>n-aš</i>	<i>karuššiyazi</i>
1	5
<i>šagan-ma-kan</i>	<i>laḥuttari</i>
4	4
<i>apuš-ma-kan</i>	<i>p(a)rā lē uwanzi</i>
4	5

The opening words of the first and third verses (*kuwaš* and *na-aš*) each consist of one and two syllables, at least they are shorter than the words that follow them in the same verses (*wappiyazi* and *karuššiyazi*), which contain respectively four and five syllables. On the other hand, the opening word of the second verse (*apiya-ma-aš*) contains four syllables, while the second term (*ari*) is made up of two. The pattern that emerges is a double chiasmus in the number of the syllables: short – long (2-4)/long – short (5-

2)/short – long (1-5). The homeoteleuton found in the first and third verses, (*wappiyazi* and *karuššiyazi*), and in the second and fourth verses (*ari* and *lahuttari*) borders on alternate rhyme. These rhetorical devices combine to give the lines a rhythmic pattern. The fourth and fifth verses are longer than the previous ones with eight and nine syllables and have the enclitic *-ma-kan* in common at the beginning of the phrase.

In some recitative passages in the rituals, namely in the *historiolae*, these same characteristics (rhythm, figures of speech) are found. For example from “Lord of Tongue” (CTH 338 KUB 12.62+, Vs. 10’-15’):⁵

A *lalaš išḫaš kuwapi pāši*

B *palši karipuwanz[zi pāimi]*

C **walkwi tarwauwanzi pāimi*

D *alili war^ṛšur^ṛwanzi p^ṛāimi^ṛ*

E *antuḫši lalauwanzi pāimi*

F *palšaš=za karipuwanz natta memmai*

G **walkuwaš=za tarwauwanzi natta memmai*

H *alila-aš=za waršuwanz natta memmai*

I ^D*Ištanuš=za idalamuš lalaš natta memmai /*

“Lord of the tongue, where are you going?” ‘I’m going to the road for (her ability) to devour (the space), I’m going to the lion for (his ability) to pounce; I’m going to the *alili* -bird for (his ability) to pluck; I’m going to the man for (his ability) to speak’. The road will not refuse devouring; the lion will not refuse plouncing; the *alili* -bird will not refuse plucking. The Sun God will not refuse the evil tongues”

The passage opens with a question that introduces a dialogue. Two stanzas of four lines each follow. The first stanza (B-E) contains the first part of the dialogue and in the second stanza (F-I) the concepts are repeated and

5 G. Beckman, *Hittite Birth Rituals*. StBoT 29. Wiesbaden 1983, pp. 192.

reinforced. The pattern is repetitive due to the use of isocolon; the verses have the same number of words and the same structure. In B-E the construction is:

B dat.loc. – purpose (infinitive) – verb

KASKAL-*ši* *karipuwanz[zi* *pāimi]*

C dat.loc. – purpose (infinitive) – verb

**walkwi* *tarwauwanzi* *pāimi*

D dat.loc. – purpose (infinitive) – verb

alili *war^ʾšur^ʾwanzi* *p^ʾāimi^ʾ*

E dat.loc. – purpose (infinitive) – verb

antuḫši *lalauwanzi* *pāimi.*

Instead, F-I uses the following construction:

F subject +*za* – acc. (infinitive) – negation – verb

KASKAL-*aš=za* *karipuwanzi* *natta* *memmai*

G subject +*za* – acc. (infinitive) – negation – verb

**walkuwaš =za* *tarwauwanzi* *natta* *memmai*

H subject +*za* – acc. (infinitive) – negation – verb

alila-aš=za *waršuwanzi* *natta* *memmai*

I subject +*za* – acc. – negation – verb

^D*Ištanuš=za* *idalamuš lalaš* *natta* *memmai /.*

Epiphora can also be found in the two stanzas. In the first, the verb *pāimi* and in the second stanza the verb *memmai* appear four times. Isocolon is present because the lines have the same number of words and the same construction.⁶

These features are not found in all the recitative passages of rituals. In the following passage, from a Mastigga's ritual against family discord, we can see a narrative and recitative sections without literary artifices (CTH 404 KUB 34.84+, II 15-20):⁷

6 We consider here the syntagma Adjective – Noun (*idalamuš lalaš*) in (I) as a single unit, see A. Kloekhorst, 'Accentuation and Poetic Meter in Hittite', in: *Hethitische Literatur. Überlieferungsprozesse, Textstrukturen, Ausdrucksformen. Akten des Symposiums vom 18. bis 20. Februar 2010 in Bonn*. M. Hutter, S. Hutter-Braunsar (ed.). Münster 2011, pp. 157-176; *Accent in Hittite. A Study in Plene Spelling, Consonant Gradation, Clitics, and Metrics*. StBoT 56. Wiesbaden 2014, p. 632 f. with literature.

7 J. L. Miller, *Studies in Origins, Development and Interpretation of the Kizzuwatna Rituals*. StBoT 46. Wies-

II (15) *nu EGIR-a[(nd)]a [(^{MUNUS}ŠU.G)I IM²-a]n da-a-i nu-uš-ša-an še-er* [(*ar-ḥa* 7 EME^{HLA})] (16) *i-ya-az-zi na-aš-kán kat-ta tar-ma-a-iz-zi n[a-aš-(kán)]* (17) *A-NA 2 BE-EL SÍSKUR še-er ar-ḥa wa-aḥ-nu-z[(i nu ki-iš-ša)-an]* (18) *me-ma-i ḥa-aš-ši-ik-ke-et-te-en ku-e-da-ni [(UD-ti nu-wa ka-a-ša)]* (19) *a-pé-el [(UD-as EME^{HLA}-eš ki-nu-na-wa-ra-aš k[(a-a-ša ad-da-a-aš)]* (20) ^DUTU-uš *tar-ma-a-it na-aš-kán ḥa-aš-ši-i d[(a-a-i)]*

“Then afterwards she takes the clay(?), whence she *makes up* seven tongues, and she *secures them to the ground*. Then she waves them (= the tongues) over the two ritual patrons, and she speaks thus: ‘On that day on which you condemned each other – the tongues of that day (are) right here – now the father, the sun-god, has hereby secured them’ And she places them in the hearth”.

(A) *nu appanda ḥašawaš wilanan dāi*

(B) *nu-šan šer arḥa *šiptameš[?] laleš iyazzi*

(C) *n-aš-kan katta tarmāizzi*

(D) *na-aš-kan *duyaš aniuraš/mukešraš išḥaš šer arḥa waḥnuzi*

(E) *nu kiššan memai*

(F) *ḥaššikketten kuedani šiwatti*

(G) *nu-wa kāša apēl šiwattaš laleš*

(H) *kinuna-war-aš kāša addāš ^Dšiuš tarmāit*

(I) *na-aš-kan ḥaššī dāi*

In these passages there are no stylistic elements that would indicate rhythm or “rhythmic prose.” Some rhetorical figures can be noted; for example, homeoteleuton in the repetition of the third-person singular ending *-ZI* in (B), (C), and (D); alliteration in the repeated *S* in (B) (*nu-šan šer arḥa *šiptameš[?] laleš iyazzi*); and anastrophe in the anticipation of the verb *ḥaššikketten* in (F). They are not enough, however, to give the text a “different” style from the norm and they have nothing of the rhythm of speech seen in the *historiola* or in the “saying” of the Edict of Ašmunikal neither in the narrative part (A-E), nor in the recited one (F-I).

As a final example, a few lines from the Myth of the Disappearance of Telipinu (CTH 324.I) will be analyzed:⁸

(5') ^{GIŠ} *lu-ut-ta-a-uš kam-ma-ra-a-aš IŠ-BAT É-ir 'túh-ḥu¹-i[š IŠ-BAT]* (6')
I-NA GUNNI-ma kal-mi-i-še-ni-iš ú-i-šu-u-ri-ia-an-ta-t[i iš-ta-na-na-aš
an-da] (7') DINGIR^{MES} *ú-i-šu-u-ri-ia-an-ta-ti I-NA TÙR an-da UDU^{HIA}*
'KI.MIN¹ I-NA 'É.GU⁴' (8') *an-da-an GU⁴^{HIA} ú-i-šu-u-ri-ia-an-ta-ti UDU-*
uš-za SILA₄-SÚ mi-im-ma-aš (9') *GU₄-ma AMAR-ŠU mi-im-ma-aš*

“Mist seized the windows. Smoke [seized] the house. In the fireplace the logs were stifled. [At the altars] the gods were stifled. In the sheep pen the sheep were stifled. In the cattle barn the cattle were stifled. The mother sheep rejected her lamb. The cow rejected her calf.”

- (A) ^{GIŠ} *luttāuš kammarāš epta*
 (B) *pir 'tuhḥu¹i[š epta]*
 (C) *ḥašši-ma kalmīšeniš wišūriantat[i*
 (D) *ištananaš anda] šiuneš wišūriantati*
 (E) *ḥili anda *ḥāwēš[?] ' wišūriantati¹*
 (F) **kuwau]waš parni andan *kuwauweš wišūriantati*
 (G) **ḥāwuš-za[?] SILA₄-šan mimmaš*
 (H) **kuwauwaš -ma AMAR-šan mimmaš /*

Many stories that we call myths are nothing more than *historiolae*, having been originally inserted in ritual texts.⁹ In the Myth of the Disappearance of Telipinu, there are many stylistic features worthy of mention. The first nine lines of text are organized according to the scheme: two (A,B) – four (C,F) – two (G,H), which is followed by a paragraph line. Given the symmetry of the construction, which is not random, these lines could be more accurately referred to as three stanzas of two, four and two verses each. Each verse consists of three units, considering the phrase, Noun – dat.loc + Postposition equal to one unit and genitive – dative locative + Postposition, (F), equal to

8 E. Laroche, *Textes mythologiques hittites en transcription*: RHA 23 (1965), pp. 89-98.

9 F. Pecchioli Daddi, *La Mitologia Ittita*. Brescia 1990, p. 28; W. Burkert, *Mito e rituale in Grecia. Struttura e storia*. Cles 1992, pp. 92-94.

one unit. The stanzas are marked by the verb at the end of the clauses and by isocolon and epiphora: in A and B the verb is *epta*; in C, D, E, F it is *wišuriyantati*; and in G, H *mimmaš*. In A and B the syntactic construction is: Object – Subject – Verb, with anastrophe for the anticipation of the object; in D, E, F it is dative locative. – Postposition – Subject – Verb, anastrophe is likewise found in the anticipation of the locative noun; in G, H, it is Subject – Object + Possessive Adjective – Verb.

In conclusion, various stylistic devices were used in the drafting of Hittite texts depending on their type. At least, it is possible to observe a clear difference in a linear, “prose style” without any noteworthy stylistic elements; and a “poetic” one, or rather, “rhythmic prose” characterized by symmetrical and repetitive constructions, and figures of speech such as alliteration, homeoteleuton, epiphora and chiasmus that facilitate mnemonic learning.¹⁰

10 R. Francia, Lo stile poetico delle *historiolae* ittite, VO XVII (2013), pp. 165-173.

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