more striking is the fact that even a word for which there are several Shōgakuhēn characters may 
be represented by an entirely different character today. I give below an example of one such word,
together with one for which the modern character is found in Shinsen Jikyō.

Ueda

Shinsen Jikyō

kasugai "clamp"

konoshirō "Chatoessa punctatus"

Glossary

a. 新撰字鏡  f. 燕, 金, 耳金, 赤金, 平所
b. 昌任  g. 志自久戸
c. 小学篇  h. 立金
d. 王義  i. 己万志
e. 王義之  j. 右立鬼

Ugaritic pwt: A Term from the Early Canaanite Dyeing Industry

The Ugaritic noun pwt has attracted attention during recent years because of its possible bearing 
on the question of the origins of the ethnic terms "Punic" and "Phoenician." In published texts

* It gives me great pleasure to express my indebtedness here to Professors William W. Hallo of Yale Un-
iversity and W. von Soden of Münster for the general guidance and specific information which they generously 
contributed to this short study. They are not to be held accountable for every viewpoint proposed herein, 
for the author has taken the liberty to disagree with his counselors at certain points.

Aside from the purely lexical observations of Virol-
leaud (PRU III, p. 137), Gordon (UT, p. 467, entry no. 467 no. 2031), and Aistleitner (WUS, p. 254), the term has been subjected to study by M. Astour in Hel-
ten-semitics (Leiden, 1965), p. 146. Astour proposes that pwt via the gentilic form ḫw∂ is the source of both 
Latin Punicus and Greek Φωνὶς and Φωνίκης. [Cf. also JNES 24 (1965) 348 f. Ed.]

the term is found only in PRU II, text 138 (= UT 1106:10) and PRU V, text 66 (= UT 2051:6).
The first text records allocations of clothing and the second the "desiderata of a guild" (the yshmm).* In both texts pwt is found in the com-
pany of terms for materials of the dyeing industry: linen (pītm),^ blue-purple (iqni),^ glaze (spsg),^  

^ On the signification "linen" rather than "flax" for pītm see Dietrich & Loretz, WD 0 III (1966), 224 f.
^ On the signification "dark, blue purple" (vs. phm "bright, red purple") for iqni see WD 0 III (1966), 
220, 227 f., 231.
^ Not much can be added to the many observations on spsg (Ginsberg, BASOR 98, 21 ff.; Albright, BASOR 98, 
24; Goetze, JCS 1, 1947, 311-15), including the latest ones by E. M. Good (JBL 77, 1958, 72-4), M. Lee (UT, 
p. 543), and W. W. Hallo (BiOr 20, 1963, 140, n. 66). The term has been restored in the passage from the royal

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and “stones of the dyer” (abn šrp). For this reason and because a cognate (fuwwatu(n) “dyer’s madder”) is available in Arabic, the UT glossary now defines pwt as “red, purple dye (?)”. The Wörterbuch of Aistleiter-Eissfeldt, on the other hand, adopts Virolleaud’s suggested rendering “bracelet.”

As an occurrence of pwt outside of the Ugaritic texts, UT (following Virolleaud) lists pu-a-ti in EA 14 I 74, II 27, 28. EA 14 is a list of presents from Amenophis IV to the Kassite ruler Burrasuriaš II. A number of the gifts are provided with “native” (i.e., non-Babylonian or “western”) appellatives, which could be either Egyptian, West Semitic, or possibly Hurrian. The term pu-a-ti (or bu-a-ti) is applied in the first two occurrences (II 27 and 28) to objects whose description is largely obscured by the lacuna in the text. In column I, line 74, however, it is clearly attached to šemār qāṭi ša ḫūrāši tamū “a hand-bracelet trimmed/edged with gold.” In short, the funerary ritual published by H. Otten (Heth. Totenrituale, Berlin: 1958, p. 32, line 32; pp. 58-9, line 7, and compare therewith VII 37: 10-11, in all of which passages saspagat is placed on the scales of a balance). One should not conclude that the term is Indo-European simply because it occurs frequently in Hittite texts. Friedrich (HWb, 280) calls it a “Wanderwort.” The same term also occurs in Akkadian texts as sābğ (CADZ, 8) and saśabğ (CADZ, 10) and possibly survives in Arabic sifṣāgatu(n) (cited in UT, p. 451). The formation of the word is not Indo-European in appearance (Kronasser, EHS, I, 114:4 and 117:4). If it designated a mineral substance mined in Anatolia or the rocky areas of North Syria, the name probably antedates the arrival of the Indo-Europeans and may even be Hattic or Hurrian. The semantic range of this term is broad. In Hittite texts it can refer to a mineral substance (twice bearing the NA, determinative: Bo 882 obv. 9, cited in Sommer & Ehelof, Papanikri, II, 361, and IBoT III 148 rev. i 9) listed with gold, silver, and precious stones, or to objects coated with this substance (XXIX 1 obv. ii 14; cf. ANET, 357, where it is translated “glassware”; note also Otten, Totenrituale, 32). The OT occurrence (Prov. 26:23) indicates a white glaze which coats an earthen vessel.

The correct Akkadian cognate to šrp in this expression is šarrpu B “to dye, steep” rather than šarrpu A “to refine (metals)” (CAD8, 102-5). 

Page 407, entry no. 2031.

Page 254, entry no. 2208.

Rankè (apud Knudtzon, Die El-Amarna Tafeln, p. 1549) classifies bu-a-ti as Egyptian, as does T. O. Lambdin, Orientalia NS 22, 364; CADB, 298a.


This passage should only be cited as extra-Ugaritic evidence for pwt if one is persuaded that pwt in Ugaritic texts is “bracelet,” but not if one believes that it is rather a term for a dye or colored paste.

The elimination of EA 14 leaves only Arabic fuwwatu(n) and the Hebrew PN Puvwu (with the ethnicnom ha-Pūni) as clear examples of early Semitic cognates to Ugaritic pwt. Attested from a later period is the Hebrew noun pū’ā “dyer’s madder.” But there is yet one more possible second millennium cuneiform term which is to be connected with Ugaritic pwt, not to be sure as a cognate, but as a loan.

The Boğazköy text KBo I 42 has been classified by Landsberger with those vocabularies which form a part of the lexical series Izi Bogh., Tablet A. Schuster has shown that the sequence of Sumerian entries in the IZI = ithub series is governed by the acrophonic principle. The entries consisting of simple DA occupy lines 31-38 (CADI 10d sub idu; the Akkad. column contains i-du, še-gu, išt-tu, and four additional entries in the lacuna). Line 39, whose Sumerian column contains the re-duplicated DA.DA, begins the section of compound Sumerograms of which DA is the initial component. Lines 44 and 45 contain the last of the compound entries in DA (DA.RI.AN.SI). Von Soden prefers to read these four signs as DA.RI itū “darium-sacrifice of the deity” (see AHw, 164, 607-8 sub dariu I and maqgu). The CAD (following Landsberger), on the contrary, interprets DA.RI.AN.SI as a variant of DA.RI.AN. SUB “to be careless, neglectful (of duty)” (CADE, 48 sub egū). It reads the signs me-kū-u of line 44 as mēkū “inactive, negligent (man)” (CADE, 48; AHw, 643a; MSL IV, 125). In line 45 the Akkadian rendering is written pa-da-nu (see pa-la-nu in 49). This the CAD reads as bā-ṭa-nu! “to be idle, inactive” (CADE, 174-6; AHw, 116b). The spelling of bitālu with nu is an error which may have arisen during an earlier period when the final sign in the nom. sg., if written with the lum sign (Deimel/Labat #565), could have been read as lum or num. When one
considers the Hittite column at this point, the conclusion is well nigh inescapable that the Hittite scribe misunderstood the forerunner. In me-ku-ú he probably saw meqqu (AHw, 607-8) “sacrifice” and rendered it with ́ippanduwar “to make an offering, libate.” In the Akkadian pa-da/ta-nu, which he may well have read as pa-da/ta-šu, he probably saw the verb patalu “to twist” and rendered it with Hittite malkiyawar “to twist, spin.” Beginning at line 44 the Mesopotamian forerunner inserts a section of entries with Sumerian ȘE.BE.DA. This violates the acrophonic principle governing the IZI = šatû series, and must be explained on another principle, that of allied meaning. ȘE.BE.DA like DĀ.RI.AN.SI conveys the idea of idleness (and perhaps negligence). The entries in the Akkadian column should be interpreted from this point of view. Egû (e-gu, line 47) was not intended by the forerunner to represent egû “antimony paste” (CADE, 47d-48a), much less ekû/iktû (ADI, 69; unit of surface measure), which Ungnad correctly perceived to have been the Hittite scribal editor’s understanding (OLÜ 1923, col. 572; cited by Goetze, Tunnavi, 94), but rather the verb egû “to be careless, negligent” (CADE, 8-49). Bedû (bê-du-ú, line 48) was not intended by the forerunner to represent pedû “to release, send away,” as possibly misunderstood by the Hittite editor (= Hitt. piṣgatallaš; see Tunnavi, 95 and n. 377), nor even petû “to open (the grain on the threshing floor),” as proposed by Goetze (Tunnavi, 95), but rather the verb bedû/beitû, which von Soden (AHw, 117d) refrains from translating, and which the CAD defines as “to cheat (?)” (CADB, 215a sub betû). The passage in VAB VI, 266:23 (at the close of an OB letter) reads: lâ tebeṭṭî ʾissurātim šubilaššu, “do not delay (?)! Have him bring the birds to me!” The meaning “to delay” is proposed (quite tentatively) on the basis that one expects warnings against delay at the end of such letters. That there are other terms for “to delay” does not rule out the attribution of such a meaning to betû. Furthermore, a possible cognate to betû exists in Arabic baṭu’ ā “to tarry, linger, delay, daily.” If this interpretation is correct, it places betû squarely in the same general semantic range as the verb egû and baṭâlu discussed above. One cannot be sure that the Sumerian column of line 50 con-

13 Bezold, Babyl.-assyrisches Glossar, 231b; compare the root *ptl in Hebrew, Aramaic, Arabic, Ethiopic, etc. tained ȘE.BE.DA. If so, then ap-pu-šu may have been intended by the forerunner as apputtu, a term frequently used at the end of letters for somewhat the same purpose as the verbal expressions lâ tebeṭṭî and lâ teggi (see AHw, 60d). In the syno-

nym list published and discussed by von Soden in ZA 43, pages 243, 273 f. apputtu = nāpallu “reply (requested)” and lâ teggi “do not be negligent!” Thus the signs in the Akkadian column of line 50 were not intended by the forerunner to be read as abbuttû (the hairstyle); CAD. 48-50; AHw, 5d; so Goetze in Tunnavi, 95 nor even (as was probably) the interpretation of the Hittite editor țiubunu-šu (= Hitt. la-az-s[i-š] “good”; see Otten, AfO 16, 70). The proposed țiubunu “goodness(?)” although probably close enough to satisfy the Hittite editor, cannot be satisfactorily connected with the verb țiâbûm “to be good” in any of its derivative formations. Accordingly, it can hardly have been the intended reading of the forerunner.

The only Akkadian entry in these lines at first glance resists this interpretation of ȘE.BE.DA is ši-in-du (line 46), for to my knowledge no Akka-


dian word exists which phonetically resembles šindu and conveys the notion of idleness, carelessness, or delay. The shape of the sign read in in ši-in-du is, however, a rare form at Bogazköy (see Forrer, BotU I, sign no. 130 and Friedrich, HKL II, no. 283, neither of whom attest this shape). Though within this very same tablet (and even in the Hittite column) there is a convinc ing example of this shape for in: ’hî-in-ga-niyya-va-[ar] in obv. iii 18c, we may therefore recon struct the original entry as ši-ṭu-šu “to neglect, sin.” 156

156 Cf. nu-še-bi-da = la i-še-et, OECT 6:23:15 f., quoted Deimel, SL 2:367:123c; le-šu u ́e-ṭu-šu-ni, Gössmann, Era-Epos I 77 (p. 95 as restored from Lambert, AfO 18:397 [Rm. 2:477]).
"he who releases, frees" and rendered it with pišgatallaš ("he who sends away"). And in ap-pu-tu (line 50) he apparently saw ṣub-bu-tu and rendered it lazzīš ("good"). The Akkadian entry of line 46 he read as śinītu and connected with the šinītu best known to him, the noun which (according to information generously contributed to me by Prof. von Soden) derives ultimately from the root *wšm. This simtu (later šinītu) denotes a colored paint, saline, or paste (usually gold-colored), and often (especially in Neo- and Late-Babylonian documents) a brand or ownership-mark. From this latter meaning is derived the late verb ṣamātu "to designate with a mark." It is probable that, when the Hittite editor entered pu-wa-at-ti-ši in the right-hand column, he was thinking of this šinītu, which denoted a colored paint or paste. Puwattiš is not attested elsewhere in published texts.

But is puwattiš a native Hittite word, which was loaned into Ugaritic as pwt, or is it a Semitic word borrowed by the Hittites to denote a colored paste which they had become familiar with from the Semites? The presence of puwattu(n) in Arabic and the PN Puwwa in Hebrew incline one to the view that the term is native Semitic. In the light of other names applied by the ancients to madder, Semitic *puwattu could have meant "the red (one)" or simply "the root." If puwattiš is Hittite, it might be connected etymologically with the primary verb puwai- "to crush (?)". Related to the verb puwai- are the Luwian iterative verb puššai-, as well as the reduplicated pupušša- and the noun pupulli- "crushed, tram-pled down ruins." It is not likely that the putiš which occurs in HT 3 obv. 4; VII 29 obv. 14; and XXXV 142 rev. iv 14, and which designates a small unit of dry measure employed for salt, is related. The term puwattiš, if it is a native Hittite word, might then denote that which is crushed or ground, i.e., "powder, saline, paste."

In summary, we have attempted to demonstrate: (1) that Ugaritic pwt in both of its occurrences (UT 1106:10 and 2051:5) designates a substance useful to persons (the yšm?) engaged in dyeing or tanning; (2) that the El Amarna word (probably Egyptian) b/pu-a-ši should not be connected with pwt unless one is convinced that the latter also designates a "bracelet"; and (3) that another linguistic relative of pwt, "Hittite" puwattiš, not only resembles it phonetically but was apparently used by the Hittite editor of IziBogh. A to render what he understood as Akkad. šinītu "(colored) paste." The evidence of IziBogh. A does not warrant in itself the determination of the specific color of the paste. If pwt/puwattiš is red or red-purple, we can determine this only on the basis of the Semitic cognates. We have intentionally left open the question of the direction of the loan, since, although a suitable Hittite etymology of puwattiš is readily at hand in puwai-, one would certainly expect the loan to follow the opposite direction a priori in view of the acknowledged Canaanite superiority over the other peoples of the East Mediterranean in the technique of dyeing.

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18 The information on which much of the discussion of šinītu/simtu is based was generously supplied to me by Prof. von Soden.
19 E. Ebeling, Glossar zu den neubabylonischen Briefen, pp. 229 (sub šinītu) and 227 (sub šamātu).
20 See Ebeling, p. 227, and R. Labat, Manuel, 323b.
22 Ibid., p. 106.
23 Goetze, JCS 1, 1947, 316 ff.; Güterbock, Or NS 25, 123 ff.
24 HWb Erg. 2 1961, 21 citing Laroche, RHA f. 63 (1958), 107. See also N. van Brock, RHA f. 75 (196, n. 9). The šša- may be the Luwian iterative again.
25 To the only occurrence of pupulli heretofore (Hittite law 173) may now be added with plausibility the broken lexical text passage KBo I 42 obv. iii 6: Gō. BAL = te-ši = URU-aš [p(u-ša-ul-ti)]. Regardless of the Mesopotamian forerunner's intended meaning of te-ši (normalized tešt, tešt, or tellu), the Hittite editor apparently understood the entry as tellu/tillu "city ruins, tell." Hence, he rendered it in Hittite as "of a city the [r[uins]."
26 HT 3 obv. 4 has now been read by Rosenkranz (ZANF 23, 238) as kut-šu-te-š and connected with Akkad. kutpā. For my objections to this see my review of Friedrich's third supplementary fascicle to HWb in JAOS 87,3, pp. 353-357 (below).