

ATTI DEL II CONGRESSO  
INTERNAZIONALE DI HITTITOLOGIA

a cura di  
Onofrio CARRUBA - Mauro GIORGIERI - Clelia MORA

STUDIA MEDITERRANEA

9

ESTRATTI

Gianni Iuculano Editore  
PAVIA 1995

## Neo-Hittite Nominal Inflection

H. Craig Melchert (Chapel Hill)

The last quarter-century has seen great progress in chronologizing Hittite texts and manuscripts. In the wake of this development linguists unsurprisingly have concentrated their efforts on establishing the grammar of Old Hittite (OH) on the basis of assured OH manuscripts. However, the OH corpus is quite small. The great bulk of our evidence continues to consist of Neo-Hittite (NH) manuscripts which are either certainly copies of older compositions or represent texts whose date of composition is indeterminate. Barring dramatic new discoveries, we are likely to face this situation for the foreseeable future.

An urgent desideratum is therefore an objective means of evaluating the relative reliability of such manuscripts in terms of their linguistic features. Unusual features in these manuscripts may be precious archaisms which by accident are not (yet) attested in our limited OH corpus. However, they may instead be neologisms, or even mere creations of the copyists, unreal forms which never existed in the language of any period. I cite as one famous example the preterite first singular *kueršun* "I cut" (KBo X 2 ii 48; NH ms. of OH text). This word may be a genuine archaism, in Indo-European terms a "sigmatic aorist" (Oettinger, 1979: 119). However, given the coexistence of both *kuer-* and *karš-* "cut" in Hittite, it is difficult to exclude the possibility of a blend of the two (genuine or erroneous).

It seems to me self-evident that any evaluation of the features of such copies depends crucially on our first establishing not only the synchronic grammar of Old Hittite, but also that of Neo-Hittite, **based on assured Neo-Hittite compositions**. Only then can we judge the likelihood of a given neologism (or misinterpretation).

As a contribution to the ongoing task of establishing the grammar of Neo-Hittite, I offer the following brief overview of NH nominal inflection (substantives and adjectives). This study is based on the NH corpus given in Melchert (1977: 128ff), with two significant changes. First, for obvious reasons I have added the extensive and important text of the Treaty of Tuthaliya IV with Kurunta, found on the bronze tablet edited by Otten (1988). Second, I have excluded the texts of Šuppiluliuma I. Neu (1979a et alit.) has argued that the language of Šuppiluliuma I is Middle Hittite. While I am not yet entirely persuaded that we may simply move the boundary between Middle and Neo-Hittite from the beginning to the end of this

king's reign, it is now indisputable that the language of texts from Šuppiluliuma-I differs markedly from that of later Neo-Hittite. It therefore seems prudent to first establish NH grammar without these texts and then consider them separately.

I will first treat general features of NH nominal inflection and then discuss some problems of specific formal classes. Some of the most important NH innovations are already well-known, and these are confirmed by my survey using the restricted corpus. First, the OH genitive plural ending *-an* is not attested in NH, and the dative-locative plural ending *-aš* also serves for the genitive. Second, the OH allative case in *-a* is moribund in NH, appearing only in set phrases such as *tuliya* "in(to) the assembly". Some apparent exceptions are Luvianisms (e.g. *humma* in KUB I 8 iv 12 and *hadanteya* in KBo XII 38 iii 10). Likewise the instrumental case is restricted to traditional phraseology (*šakuwaššarit* ZI-it "wholeheartedly" in KUB XXIII 1 ii 35 and *Ḫšunit kaneššant-* "recognized/favored by the god" in KBo VI 28+ Ro 5). There are also no examples of a vocative separate from the nominative in NH.

Contrary to the statements found in several handbooks (Sturtevant, 1933: 162 & 178; Friedrich, 1960: 45; Kammenhuber, 1969: 304), McIntyre (1986) has shown that there is no "confusion" of the plural endings *-eš*, *-uš* and *-aš* in NH. We find rather total replacement of animate nominative plural *-eš* by accusative plural *-uš*, with three clearly defined exceptions: (1) ablauting *u*-stem adjectives unsurprisingly generalize nom. pl. *-aweš* at the expense of the irregular acc. pl. *-amuš*; (2) stems in *-t-* (overwhelmingly participles in *-ant-*) generalize *-anteš*; (3) the relative/interrogative generalizes *kuiēš*. The animate nominative and accusative plural thus do merge, but in a much more regular fashion than previously suggested. Use of *-aš* as nominative or accusative plural is highly restricted (see further below). Since Dr. McIntyre herself will soon publish her results in full elsewhere, I forgo any further details.

As a result of the above changes, the NH noun and adjective have only four distinct cases in the singular (nominative, accusative, genitive and dative-locative) and two in the plural (nominative-accusative and genitive-dative-locative), plus the ablative-instrumental which functions as both. The neuter, of course, does not distinguish nominative from accusative in either singular or plural.

I turn now to problems regarding the various formal classes. The basic inflection of *a*-stems calls for no special comment. Of considerable interest, however, are the apparent frequent alternations of *a*- and *i*-stem inflection in NH: e.g. NSgC *dannattiš* beside NAPIC *dannadduš*, NAPInt *dannatta*, GDLP *dannattaš*. Thanks to the work of Frank Starke, we may now clarify the status of this alternation considerably. Starke (1990: 59ff and passim) has shown that Luvian has "i-motion", whereby the animate nominative and accusative of most adjectives and many nouns are marked by an obligatory *-i-* (actually *-ī-*) added to the stem.

It is the effects of this system which are seen in varying degrees in NH inflection of *a*-stems. As per Oettinger (1986: 43ff), Hittite nouns in *-alla-* and *-(a)ttalla-* are either loanwords from Luvian or new creations to Hittite bases. Since the Luvian models are underlyingly *a*-stems, the Hittite words usually inflect as such (e.g. NAPIC *ḫaliyatalluš*, *parā uwattalluš*, etc.). However, in some cases the

Luvian "i-motion" is retained, to which is added Hittite inflection (*kupiyatalliuš*, *ḫarpanalliuš*, *arkammanalliuš*). In the case of the hybrid adjective *annalla/i-* "former" (with Hittite base seen in *amaz* "formerly" but Luvian suffix), the NH usage comes close to the Luvian model: we find NSgC *annalliš*, ASgC *annallin*, NAPIC *annalliuš* but NASgNt *annallan* and AbIn *annallaz* (however NASgNt *annalli* as if from an *i*-stem is also found, contrary to the Luvian model). Predictably, more often the Hittites' usage of the *i*-forms is sporadic. We also find occasional apparent backformations (e.g. NAP *karuwila* in KUB XIV 8 Ro 9 to what is otherwise an *i*-stem!).

As suggested to me by Norbert Oettinger, the Luvian "i-motion" is also surely the source of many other secondary *i*-stems in NH manuscripts (but which are not assured NH compositions). The combination of the Luvian restriction to animate nominative and accusative plus the generalization of *-uš* as the animate nominative-accusative plural explains why forms in *-iuš* are especially frequent: *garātīuš*, *gimriuš*, *kiššariuš*, *lahḫanziuš*, *šarḫulīuš*, *šepīuš*, and so forth. There is one famous example in a NH composition: *išpantiuš* (KBo IV 4 iii 31). The alternative explanation still entertained in Melchert (1990: 198<sup>2</sup>) may now be abandoned.

Ablauting *i*-stem adjectives are mostly unproblematic in NH. Contracted forms are extremely rare and probably isolated archaisms (*šuppa* in KUB XIV 10 iv 13 and KBo XI 1 Ro 32.40, both prayers). For the dative-locative singular we find both regular *-ai* and analogical *-i*: *šallai* beside *šalli* in KBo IV 10 Ro 5 and 33 (but not *-iya*; see further below).

Neuter *i*-stem nouns are perfectly regular. In stems in *-āi-* there is a clear tendency to generalize *-āi-* throughout (e.g. GSg *lingayaš*, DLSg *lingai*, *šaklāi*, DLP *šaklāyaš*, AbIn *zahḫayaz*), but oblique forms in *-(i)ya-* are also well attested: GSg *linkiyaš*, *ḫaštiyaš*, DLSg *linkiya/zahḫiya*, AbIn *zahḫiyaza*.

In general non-ablauting *i*-stem nouns inflect regularly. The dative-locative singular is notably always in *-i*, never in *-iya* (cf. Kammenhuber, 1969: 302, on OH). However, in the animate nominative-accusative plural there seems to be serious confusion, with four(!) competing forms. As cited above, we do find expected *-iuš*: *annaliuš*, *išpantuzziyalīuš*, etc.). However, *-iēš* is equally well attested: *karuwiliēš*, *lulaḫiēš*, *ḫapiriēš*. This is also the one place where there are genuine examples of *-aš* as a nominative-accusative: *lulaḫiyaš* (KBo IV 10 Vo 3), *ḫapiriyaš* (ibid.), EGIR-*aš* (KBo VI 29 ii 23). Thanks to the confusion caused by the "i-motion" (see above), we even find backformed *-aš* as if to an *a*-stem: *ḫapiraš* (KUB XIX 50 iv 19), *išpantuzziyalaš* (KUB XIV 14 Vo 27, XIV 8 Vo 39). Finally, there are also a few examples of *-iš*: *lulaḫiīš* (ABOT 56 ii 25), *altanniš* (KBo XI 1 Ro 16), LÜ.MEŠ *paḫhurīš* (KUB XXIII 1 ii 13).

Any account of this bewildering variety must be tentative. The appearance of *-iēš* instead of *-iuš* against the general rule may be related to the exceptional behavior of *kuiēš* cited above. However, the reason for the latter is itself quite unclear, and I cannot explain why *kui-* should form *kuiēš* without exception, while *-iēš* elsewhere is sporadic.

The ending *-(i)yaš* beside *-iēš* reminds us of the replacement of *-ye-* by *-ya-* in the verb in NH (see Carruba, 1962: 157ff., et al.). However, the latter seems to be a

gradual analogical process which by late NH is thoroughly complete (see Melchert, 1977: 32ff). The chronological distribution of nominal *-(i)yaš* for *-iēš* is not at all comparable (NB *lulahhiēš* in Bo 86/299 iv 2 vs. *lulahiyaš* in KBo IV 10 Vo 3, both Tuthaliya IV). Nevertheless, one still thinks of a possible "polarization" or "dis-similation" of */-ye-/* to */-ya-/*. Finally, the examples of *-iēš* may be taken as cases of syncope (of either */-yes/* or */-yas/*). The adverb SIG<sub>5</sub>-in "well" (*\*lazzin* < NASgNt *\*lazziyan* to *lazziyant-*) seems to be a certain example of syncope. Compare also EGIR-*izzin* "afterwards" at KBo IV 14 iii 71 (N-ASgNt *\*appizzin* < *\*appizziyan* used adverbially). It remains likely that such syncope contributed to the transfer of OH adjectives in *-zziya-* to *i*-stem inflection in NH. It is also true that there are very rare examples of a NPIC *-iyaš* just to *iya*-stems in OH (Neu, 1979b: 192), but it seems to me implausible that this is the source of NPIC *-iyaš* in *i*-stems in NH.

The inflection of *u*-stem nouns is completely regular in NH. So is that of ablauting *u*-stem adjectives, with the exception cited above that *-aweš* is generalized to the anim. acc. plural, ousting *-amuš*.

The inflection of neuter *l*-stems, *n*-stems and *r/n*-stems remains unchanged in NH. It is worth noting that this includes the irregular paradigms of *ēšhar/išhan*- "blood", *tēkan/takn*- "earth", *wātar/widār* "water", and *uttar/uddār* "word". In the case of verbal nouns in *-war/-waš*, where other case forms are rare throughout Hittite, we do find competing forms with and without *-r-*: AbIn *hanieššuwaz* (KUB XXVI 43 Vo 11) but *šallanumarraza* (KUB XXVI 32 i 12). However, in the absence of a thorough survey of OH and MH examples, this alternation may or may not be a NH innovation.

As is well-known, animate *n*-stems of the type *hāraš/hāranan* "eagle" are subject to two competing analogical levelings, and the resulting uncertainty appears to have continued in NH. On the one hand, we find NSg *arkammaš*, ASg *arkamman*, API *arkammuš*, DLSg *kutruī* and NPI *kutruwēš*, but also GSg *arkammanas* (KUB XIX 37 iii 47). In the case of the extremely common word *memiya(n)*- "word", we find consistently ASg *memiyan* after NSg *memiyaš* (and once NAPI *memiyaš* for *\*memiyēš* as per above), but otherwise an *n*-stem throughout: DLSg *memiyanī/memini*, API *memiyanuš*, GDLPI *memiyanas*, AbIn *memiyanaz/meminaza*.

Stems in *-tt-* (such as *šiwatt*- "day") and *-ant-* call for no special comment. As indicated above, stems in *-ant-* do for some reason tend to generalize *-ēš* in the animate nominative-accusative rather than *-uš*, although there are some examples of *-uš* following the general pattern.

Among irregular nouns, *utnē* "land" has completely generalized *utnē-*. I note in particular that only *utnē* is attested in NH for the dative-locative singular. The noun "heart" appears to have retained its irregular paradigm: NASg *ŠA-er* but DLSg *kartī*. Likewise we find NASg *É-er* "house", but GSg *parnaš* and DLSg *É-ri*. Particularly striking is the case of the word for "god". The NSg is consistently DINGIR<sup>(LIM)</sup>-*iš*, pointing to an *i*-stem, and the phonetic complements of most other case forms are consistent with this (although most are strictly speaking ambiguous). However, in KUB XXVI 33 iii 20 we find the remarkable NAPI DINGIR.MEŠ-*muš*, which cannot belong to a regular *i*-stem declension. It also

seems worth mentioning that we appear to have no NH examples of the accusative singular.

The example of "god" raises the thorny issue of variation, even in the restricted corpus of assured NH compositions. As exemplified several times above, some variation is due simply to the irregular nature of analogy. We must also take into account the gradual nature of all linguistic change: the spread of *-uš* for *-ēš* or that of *-ya-* for *-ye-* in verbs both take place before our eyes as we move through the texts of succeeding NH kings. Both changes are complete only by the texts of Tuthaliya IV and Suppiluliuma II. We must therefore reckon with "transition phases". As shown by the NAPI DINGIR.MEŠ-*muš* or AbIn *Dšiumit*, even NH compositions may contain archaisms. This fact is hardly surprising, given the strong traditional bent of the Hittite scribal bureaucracy. We can also easily find similar features in our own religious and political discourse.

I readily concede that the sources of variation just cited, especially the archaisms, reduce the value of NH compositions as a diagnostic of the sort I proposed earlier. Nevertheless, we have seen that such variation is generally limited to certain formal classes or particular items of vocabulary. More importantly, **innovations** in Neo-Hittite are highly restricted. We may therefore reasonably conclude that features of NH copies of older texts which are not explainable in terms of these innovations (either directly or as hypercorrections) are likely to reflect genuine archaisms.

## REFERENCES

- Carruba, Onofrio  
1962 Review of J. Friedrich, *Die hethitischen Gesetze*. *Kratylos* 7.155-160.
- Friedrich, Johannes  
1960 *Hethitisches Elementarbuch* I<sup>2</sup>. Heidelberg: Winter.
- Kammenhuber, Annalies  
1969 "Hethitisch, Palaisch, Luwisch und Hieroglyphenluwisch". *Handbuch der Orientalistik* I.2.1/2.2 (*Altkeleinasische Sprachen*), 119-357. Leiden: Brill.
- McIntyre, Linda L.  
1986 *Animate Plural in Neo-Hittite*. University of North Carolina M.A. thesis. Chapel Hill.
- Melchert, H. Craig  
1977 *Ablative and Instrumental in Hittite*. Harvard University Ph.D. dissertation. Cambridge MA.  
1990 "Adjective Stems in *\*-iyo-* in Anatolian". *HS* 103.198-207.
- Neu, Erich  
1979a "Zum sprachlichem Alter des Hukkana-Vertrages". *KZ* 93.64-84.  
1979b "Einige Überlegungen zu den hethitischen Kasusendungen". *Hethitisch und Indogermanisch*, edd. Erich Neu and Wolfgang Meid, 177-196. Innsbruck: Institut f. Sprachw. d. Univ. Innsbruck.
- Oettinger, Norbert  
1979 *Die Stammbildung des hethitischen Verbums*. Nürnberg: Hans Carl.  
1986 "Anatolische 'Kurzgeschichten' ". *KZ* 99.43-53.

Otten, Heinrich

1988 *Die Bronzetafel aus Boğazköy* (= StBoT Beiheft 1). Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz.

Starke, Frank

1990 *Untersuchung zur Stammbildung des keilschriftluwischen Nomens* (= StBoT 31). Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz.

Sturtevant, Edgar H.

1933 *A Comparative Grammar of the Hittite Language*. Philadelphia: LSA.