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Shatskov, A.

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Author: Shatskov, A

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Hittite and Indo-European nasal presents: Formal aspects.

6.1 In this chapter, I will treat the formal side of comparison between nasal presents in Hittite and in other IE branches. As for the other Anatolian languages, so far no unambiguous examples of infixes have been detected, but there are quite a few *nu*-verbs in Luwian, see 4.17.

6.2.1 The comparison between Hittite verbs and verbs in other Indo-European languages is complicated by a fundamental difference between the respective verbal systems. In most ancient Indo-European languages except for Anatolian, a finite verbal form is derived from a certain stem rather than immediately from a root. In Hittite, we only have two tenses, present and preterite, which essentially differ only in endings, and there is no stem variation within a paradigm, cf. 1.4.

While the origin of the infix is still disputed (cf. 1.8), it was undoubtedly a marker of a present stem at the latest stage of PIE. This function is clearly seen not only in Indo-Iranian (Skt. pres. *bhinátti* : Aor. *abhet* ‘to split’), but also in Latin (pres. *findō* : perf. *fidī* ‘to split’), Greek (pres. κίρνημι : aor. ἐκέρασα ‘to mix’), Lithuanian (pres. *limpù* : pret. *lipaũ* ‘to cling, stick’), Old Irish (pres. ind. *sernaid* : pret. *-sert* ‘to scatter’) and Tocharian (Toch.A *kärsnām*, pret. *šärsā* ‘to know’), even though in some cases it was generalized throughout the paradigm as in Lat. *iungō*, *iunxī*. In Hittite, the nasal infix does not mark a specific aspectual or temporal stem. While we have pairs of verbs like *hark-* ‘to perish’ and *harnink-* ‘to destroy’, the latter obviously infixes, in Hittite they are two lexically distinct verbs.

6.2.2 One could argue that *hark-* and *harnink-* are in fact reflexes of two different stems, present and aorist, of a single PIE verb²⁰⁶. In that case, the assumption would be that the Anatolian verbal system underwent a dramatic simplification process of the

²⁰⁶ Strunk (1967: 29f.) argued that nasal presents were derived from root aorists in PIE.

original verbal system with the present, aorist and perfect stems, which became to function as distinct verbs. On the other hand, it may also be argued that the infix originally had some specific derivational meaning and only later, after Proto-Anatolian branched off, it came to be reinterpreted as one of the markers of the present stem in PIE, along with other suffixes like **-ye/o-*. E.g., Strunk (1994) argued that prior to the development of the present : aorist opposition various suffixed formations expressed manners of action (Aktionsarten) and only later entered the system of the present tense. While the loss of the present : aorist opposition in Anatolian certainly cannot be excluded²⁰⁷, there is no indication in Hittite that such an opposition ever existed (cf. 1.2-4 with note 4)). Therefore, I am inclined to follow Strunk's views on this issue.

6.2.3 In Hittite, nasal presents belong to the domain of derivation. It is especially clear in the case of *nu*-verbs, which became very productive in Hittite and could be derived from adjectives and nouns as well, see 4.7-8. It is likely that infixed verbs enjoyed some limited productivity in the prehistory of Hittite (on the *harnink-* type see 2.4.5 and the entry for *harnink-*). The verbs *zinni-* 'to finish' and *sunna-* 'to fill' may also be inner-Anatolian creations, as they have no verbal cognates outside Anatolian; most probably, they were derived from Hitt. *zē-* 'to be ready (about food)' and **seuh₃/suh₃-* 'to be full' (cf. also *sū-* 'full', *suwa-* 'to fill').

6.2.4 While there is a substantial number of nasal presents in Hittite, there are only a few cases in which a Hittite nasal stem corresponds to a similarly old nasal present in other IE languages. I would consider certain only the following verbs: Hitt. *tarna-* 'to release' and Toch.A *tärk-*, pres. *tärnā-* 'to dismiss', Hitt. *tamink-* 'to attach' and Skt. *tanákti* 'to pull together', Hitt. *ninink-* 'to move, disturb' and Lith. *su-ninkù*, *-nikti* 'to become involved, assault', and finally Hitt. *arnu-* 'to move' and Skt. *ṛṇóti* 'to move, put in motion' (see the respective entries). Given the amount of infixed verbs

²⁰⁷ There are clear examples of simplification in the Hittite verbal system. For instance, Hittite has only one participle in *-ant-*; in Luwian, however, the participles have the suffix *-m(m)a/ī-* and also petrified participles in *-nt-*: e.g., *walant-/ulant-* 'dead' (cf. Melchert 1993: 250). In my opinion, it is safe to assume that in Proto-Anatolian there were at least two participial stems.

and especially *nu*-verbs in Hittite, it seems safe to assume that this type of derivation still was productive after the separation from Proto-Indo-European and remained productive in the prehistory of Hittite²⁰⁸.

6.3.1 The infix can only be established in Hittite via comparison with cognate forms in Hittite or other Anatolian and IE languages. Some of these comparisons and etymologies are not beyond doubt. Moreover, the alleged Hittite reflexes of PIE nasal presents do not have much in common with each other. They may belong to both *hi*- and *mi*-conjugation, e.g., *sunna*-^{hhi} ‘to fill’ and *tarna*-^{hhi} ‘to release’ vs. *hulle*-^{mi} ‘to strike’ and *harnink*-^{mi} ‘to destroy’. The shape of the infix also varies. Five verbs have *-nin-* (see 2.1), *hinik/hink-* and *tamenik/tamink-* may have preserved traces of the ablaut *-ni/n-* (see 2.4.4), while in yet other verbs the infix is just plain *-n-*, occasionally assimilated to the preceding /l/, as in *hulle-*.

If the last consonant in the root is a laryngeal, it is usually either assimilated to the infix, as in *zinni-* ‘to finish’ or *sunna-* ‘to fill’, or lost in a three-consonant cluster, as in *hulle-* ‘to smash’ < **h₂ul-n-h₁-V*. In the latter case, the former presence of a laryngeal is betrayed by the connecting vowel *-u-* in the 1pl. (e.g., 1pl. pret. act. *hu-ul-lu-mi-en*, see Eichner 1988: 136ff. and Melchert 1994: 57).

6.3.2 The infix *-nin-*, e.g., in *harnink-* ‘to destroy’ or *sarnink-* ‘to compensate’ (see in more detail 2.1-2), does not have any direct parallels outside Anatolian, with the possible exception of Slavic **-nǫ-*, on which cf. 2.1.7. There are several theories concerning the origin of *-nin-* (see again 2.1.7), but all of them involve the full grade of the infix, **-né-*. Moreover, the verbs *hink-* and *tamink-* seem to have preserved reflexes of the ablaut *-ni/n-*, which could be directly compared to the Indo-Iranian data (on which cf. 1.8). Thus, Hittite is one of the few languages that actually show the traces of the full grade of the infix. There may also be vestiges of ablaut in *nu*-verbs, if *wa-aḥ-nu-ú-mi* KBo 17.1+ II 18' OS and *hu-is¹-nu-ú-ut* KBo 3.28 II 19 OH/NS do reflect /ū/ < **-néu-* in the singular.

²⁰⁸ Note also that Hittite *nu*-verbs have a limited number of correspondences among Luwian *nu*-verbs, see 4.17.

6.3.3 Not a single infix verb can be shown to have an unambiguous full grade of the root²⁰⁹. There are some *nu*-verbs with a full-grade of the root, e.g., *tepnu-* ‘to diminish’²¹⁰, so it seems that for a synchronic derivation the zero grade of the root was no longer a requirement. Since verbal stems in **-néu-/-nu-* have a zero grade in the root in PIE (LIV: 17), one would expect their Hittite descendants to have a zero grade of the root as well. The Hittite *nu*-verbs with the full grade of the root must be of late and/or secondary origin.

Summing up, Hittite infix verbs had a zero grade of the root and some of them still preserve traces of full grades of the infix and the suffix *-nu-*. This situation matches well the data of the other IE languages, especially Indo-Iranian, where the ablaut was clearly preserved, cf., e.g., Skt. 3sg. pres. act. *yunákti* < **yu-né-g-ti* : 3pl. pres. act. *yuñjánti* < **yu-n-g-énti* ‘to yoke’ and 1.8.

6.3.4 Hittite infix verbs consistently show a vowel *-i-* after the nasal. In the *nin*-verbs, it is explained by a regular sound change $i < *e/_nK$. In *zinni-* and other verbs of this type as well as in *tamenik-* and *hinik-*, such a vocalism is unexpected. A likely explanation is that Hittite scribes used the sign NE mainly in the beginning of a word and NI elsewhere (see Oettinger 1979: 135³, Sideltsev 2002: 32ff.). However, replacing NE with NI in the non-initial syllables was a tendency rather than a rule without exceptions. Since there is not a single example of **zi-in-ne-*, the spellings with NI might reflect an actual pronunciation. In that case, in order to explain the *i*-vocalism, we have to assume a retraction of the accent to the root, see further 3.2.1.4.

6.3.5 There are several infix verbs that belong to the *hi*-conjugation instead of the expected *mi*-conjugation. In the case of *sunna-* and *tarna-*, the change to the *hi*-conjugation could be triggered by accented **ó* in **sunnóh₃-* < **sunneh₃-* and **trknóh₃-*

²⁰⁹ As for the verbs that seem to have full grade of the root, *duwarni-* is hardly infix as its root did not have a laryngeal in the auslaut; *hamank/hamink-* must be a post-PIE formation as well, see the respective entries.

²¹⁰ The zero-grade of the root in this stem (/tpnu-/) would have been indicated with the graphic *-a-*: **ta-ap-nu-*, cf. G.Sg. *ták-na-(a-)aš* < **d^hǵ-m-os* vs. N.Sg. *te-e-kán* < **d^heǵ-m* ‘earth’; it is not clear whether an anaptyctic vowel /a/ did actually develop in such a cluster (Kassian, Yakubovich 2002: 11) or not (Kloekhorst 2008: 860).

< **trknéh*₃-. This leaves us with *hamank*- and possibly *galank*-, which do not have any nasal cognates in other languages.

However, there are infixed stems with an *o*-grade in Lithuanian – *kàkti*, pres. *kankù* ‘to set off, go’, *tàpti*, pres. *tampù* ‘to become, grow’ and *ràsti*, pres. *randù* ‘to find’, see Stang 1966: 346ff. Nevertheless, these formations are hardly old. Stang points out that in Old Lithuanian there still was an athematic present *-kakti* and argues that pres. *-kakti* : pret. *kāko* was subsequently replaced with pres. *-kanka* : pret. *kāko*. According to Stang, athematic presents *-kakti*, **tap*- and **rad*- were based on the perfect stem, which accounts for the vocalism *a* (**o*). Summing up, this type of nasal presents in Lithuanian is a late formation.

Given that in Anatolian, as in Lithuanian, the infixation was still productive after the break-up of Proto-Indo-European, *hamank/hamink*- and *galank*- are very likely to be post-PIE formations as well.

Gorbachev (2007) argued for a distinct *hi*-conjugation nasal present type that was preserved only on Germanic, Baltic and Slavic²¹¹. These verbs had an accented thematic suffix and inchoative semantics, and it is exactly these features that make the comparison of this group of verbs with the *hi*-conjugation infixed verbs in Hittite impossible: the Hittite verbs are transitive and athematic. Moreover, in my opinion, the fact that these inchoative thematic infixed presents are preserved only in Germanic, Baltic and Slavic languages, which share a significant number of innovations, makes a post-PIE development of this type in the northern branches more plausible.

²¹¹ E.g., Lith. *liṃpa* ‘to cling’, OCS *-līnetŭ* ‘to cling’, Goth. *-lifniþ* ‘to remain’ < **limp-é*- < PIE **leip*-.