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ASPECTS OF VERBAL ASPECT IN HITTITE

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1. Introduction

It is not my intention here to attempt a comprehensive description of verbal aspect in Hittite, much less to enter into the complex and controversial question of the proper definition of this category. For present purposes I will take aspect to refer to a speaker’s view of the internal structure of a verbal action, as opposed to tense, which marks the time of the action described in relation to that of the speech event. I also explicitly take aspect to be a grammatical category which in principle may be formed to any verb, as contrasted with Aktionsart, which describes the inherent semantic properties of the action expressed by a particular verb. I fully realize that sharp distinctions just implied are often difficult to uphold in practice.

My goal in what follows is a modest one: to bring to the attention of colleagues usages involving aspect in the Hittite verb which are too often misunderstood or are not given the attention they deserve. Several of the analyses below have already been made by others, but these have either been wrongly rejected, ignored, or underappreciated. While scholars are often able to interpret individual cases involving aspect correctly, based on their experience and appreciation of the context, egregious misinterpretations are frequent enough to show that Sprachgefühl is not a reliable guide in such matters. I have chosen to present this topic to a wider audience because it is important for the interpretation of texts, not just for linguistic analysis of the structure of the language. I wish to make four major points.

2. "Unmarked" Basic Verbal Stem

The first point is that the basic verbal stem in Hittite can indicate any aspect according to context, as already rightly stressed by Friedrich (1960: 156). Perfective aspect with a preterite is commonplace and scarcely needs illustration (lève yaru “saw” Har. III:4 a, bitte ‘He (the king) set out and arrived in Haran’, Kho 225 Vo 7; OH text/OH ms.). Perfective present-futures are frequent in prescriptive texts such as the Hittite Laws: piti ‘shall give’, ddir ‘shall take’, etc.).
The basic steps were also found to be as important: 

1. **Magnetic_preprocessing**
   - The magnetic field is applied, allowing the magnetic moments to align along the field direction.
   - This step is necessary for the subsequent steps to be effective.

2. **Preparation_of_the_surface**
   - The surface is prepared by cleaning and conditioning.
   - This ensures that the surface is free of contaminants and ready for the subsequent measurements.

3. **Measurement_of_the_magnetic_properties**
   - The magnetic properties of the material are measured using various techniques.
   - These measurements provide information about the magnetic behavior of the material.

4. **Analysis_of_the_data**
   - The data is analyzed to extract meaningful information.
   - This step involves both qualitative and quantitative analysis.

5. **Interpretation_of_the_results**
   - The results are interpreted to understand the underlying physics.
   - This step is crucial for applying the results to practical applications.

6. **Application_of_the_results**
   - The results are applied to develop new materials or improve existing ones.
   - This step is where the research has real-world impact.

The process is iterative, and each step may require multiple sub-steps, depending on the specific requirements of the research.

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1994:78) means 'be of help,' hence wa:rkit'is/-'beconstr helpful' (with the preverb awu) conveying the sense of physical motion implied in giving military assistance.

While the ingestive or inceptive force of the marked imperfective is most common with verbs whose inherent meaning is stative, this association is not exclusive. Not all marked imperfectives from stative verbs are ingestive: (tum) sa:kiti 'sleep with' in the Hittite Laws referring to sexual intercourse surely conveys a habitual sense. On the other hand, virtually any Hititie verb can appear in the construction with the "asipe" in -wun plus abit 'put' or tute -sset 'begin to X' or 'undertake to X' (already Old Hititie). The well-known fact that the asipe is in all but a handful of cases in the marked imperfective (as {kewum or omere}wum) again reflects the ingestive/ingressive sense of the latter.

The evidence just cited (which can easily be multiplied) supports the claim made above for the general imperfective value of the suffixes -kewum, -amuiw, and -omere. I term it a "marked imperfective" because use of these suffixes unambiguously marks the verb as imperfective, while the basic verbal stem may be interpreted as perfective or imperfective (or perfect). I must insist that the prevailing prejudice that forms in -kewum and the other suffixes are iterative-durative be abandoned! We must approach each occurrence with an open mind as to which of the different imperfective values shown above is most appropriate for a given verb and its context.

I cannot offer here the full philological evidence for complementary distribution of the three suffixes. A survey shows, however, that of the stems in -amuiw, seven are complementary to -kewum, while another ten occur only sporadically (once or twice each) beside regular, productive -kewum. There are only two cases of genuine competing stems, in both of which the -amuiw form has become lexicalized: amuiwai- 'drive' beside natisai- the imperfective to nati- 'turn, guide; send' and wolbatai- 'beat' (frequentative) beside wolbatai- imperfective to wol- 'strike.'

4. Formal Presents in Past Narratives

My third major point involves a usage whose precise definition and parameters remain to be defined. My goal here is merely to establish its existence in the hope that others may contribute to a better understanding of the phenomenon. In Old Hititie narratives (attested in OH manuscripts and in later copies) the formal present tense is used to indicate unbounded or open-ended states and activities, in contrast to the formal prterite, which expresses events: nu MUNUS LU Garcia nom/m[u] la 30 DUMU MUNUS tepatu l-wu-at tapisikum bukukum DUMU NITA MES õlpyag õla:Nya yarti ANSE-IM-nanici mën an Tama[r]ma[r] anu nu tarkkam. The queen in turn gave birth to thirty daughters and also raised them herself. (Meanwhile) the sons were going back to Nusa and driving a donkey. When they arrived, in Tamarmara, they said (direct speech follows) (KBo 22.6 8-9, OXFORD. Note that the punctual events of giving birth and arriving in the town are expressed with formal preterites, while the ongoing/trip of the sons interrupted by the events in Tamarmara but with no expressed beginning or end.

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I must stress that these passages cannot be interpreted as mere instances of the so-called "historical present" of 'vivid narration.' Real cases of the latter do occur in Hittite, but they pattern quite differently, with the present tense occurring in discrete blocks: see for example KBo 3.40 Yo 12f (Mclachlan, 1986: 102); KUB 1.16 in 64R (Sumerian-Fallenstein, 1938), or the Kummars (treated by Puhl, 1991: 18). The example quoted above also shows some of the complications in trying to capture the precise function of this usage. Unbounded, open-coded states and activities should be imperfective in aspect, and there are some cases of the expected correlation of marked imperfectives and the use of the present desterbed here (cf. KUB 17.10 in 33-35 or KBo 3.34 in 23-24). But as Mclachlan shows, this correlation is not a consistent one. While it is reasonable to view the raising of the daughters as an event (hence the formal present), objectively this is an activity which takes considerable time, and which might therefore be marked as imperfective. This nuance may be expressed here only by the -kewu- suffices, but the latter may also have distributive force, emphasizing the spectacular plurality of the direct object.

The relationship of imperfective aspect to the use of the present described here thus needs further research, with special focus on the meaning of prterite forms of the marked imperfectives. Another special problem is posed by verbs of speaking. As several colleagues have pointed out to me, it is not unusual for such verbs which introduce direct quotations to appear as formal presents in past narratives (cf. Latin inquit, formally 'tells' but used for 'said'). This does not, however, account for the use of the -ika-form tarkkam in the passage cited. I close this discussion with one final point: the special use of the present in past imperfective. This nuance may be expressed here only in Old Hititie. Putative examples in Neo-Hittite historical texts are rare and sporadic (e.g. iranahubu 'became ill' in KUB 11.1,44) and there are clear contrasting examples suggesting loss of the function: contrast OH Kowatna-ìti ... pëzës wherever he went... (KBo 3.11 5) with NH Kowataram... ãndan nêclekm en wherever I turned (my eyes)." (KUB 11.1 67-68).

5. "Marked" Perfects

My last point may be quite brief. Hititie has a famous periphrastic formation with the verbs part- and e:+ plus participles. As described by Boley (1994 & 1992), the original sense was that of a stative (hold something) 'had' or 'be had,' but the construction appears to have developed into a true perfect (have Xed). As shown by Garrett (1996), the choice of auxiliary have 'or' be even correlates with the pattern of modern European languages. As Boley emphasizes, the construction is extremely rare in Old Hititie (one example in an OH ms.) and the usage may have been only underrepresented in the older period, becoming productive during the attested history of the language: Further study is needed to determine whether this construction is merely the 'marked' equivalent of the perfect value of the basic verbal stem cited in section 1 above, or conveys some different sense.
6. Conclusion

As indicated at the beginning, the present discussion is not intended to be a remotely adequate account of the category of aspect in the Hittite verb. I do hope to have called attention to underappreciated features of Hittite verbal usage and to have raised the sensitivity of colleagues towards this important issue.

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QUELQUES RÉFL ExIONS SUR LES ARCHIVES RÉCENTES DE K ÜLTEPE

Cécile MR

Entre 1881 et 1948, le site de Kültepe a livré quelques milliers de táb cunéiformes, pour une bonne part issues de fouilles clandestines. Ces táb connus en majorité depuis près d'un demi-siècle, ont donné lieu à de nombreux études historiques et thématiques. Plus récemment, les recherches ont tourné vers le remembrement d'archives provenant de marchands. Depuis 1948, les fouilles officielles et anciennes ont mis au jour de nombreux lots d'archives archéologiques, permettant alors la naissance de nouvelles méthodes de recherche.

Les études de plus en plus systématiques de ces sources, par exemple de façon systématique du cunéiforme, ont permis d'initier l'analyse de véritables lots d'archives archéologiques. Avec la parution du volume AKT 3 qui regroupe les tablettes découvertes en 1970-1971, sont devenus gratuits les études des tablettes archéologiques, qui allongent la nature des sources et leur composition.

Ces archives, plus ou moins conséquentes, se rattachent souvent à un ou plusieurs marchands dont les noms figurent dans les formulaires épistolaires, le listes moins en tant que relations commerciales. Les recherches entreprises sur ces lots d'archives ont permis de cerner des usages commerciaux, en particulier le rôle des marchands dans les marchandises. En outre, la présence occasionnelle d'une même documente de plusieurs lots de textes, ou de certains types de docum est visible par exemple dans la présence massive d'enveloppes, permet d'autre part l'identification de certains lots d'archives.