The PIE Verb for ‘to pour’ and Medial *h₃ in Anatolian

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1. ‘to pour (a liquid)’ in Hittite and Luvian

The verb ‘to pour (a liquid)’ in Hittite is originally a hi-verb lā(h)u- (OH/OS P3Sg lāḥ, P3Pl laḥuanzi, Ptc. la-ḥu-a-an).1 Clearly secondary are the hi-verb stem lā(h)uw- back-formed from the third plural and the mi-verb stems lahu- (P3Sg laḥuzzī) and lāhuwā(i)- (P3Sg lāḥūwāzzī). Important is the fact that according to the figures of the CHD, lāhu(wa)- with single -h- is attested ninety-nine times beside laḥhulti (1×), laḥhūwai (2×), laḥhūs (1×), laḥhuten and lāḥhūwatet (1× each in a single manuscript).2 The alleged stem lāḥ- is assured only in the Imv2Sg lāḥ (2×). The Pret1Sg lāḥun can belong to the mi-verb stem lahu- and is not probative for a stem lāh-. There is also in Hittite a reduplicated stem līl(h)u(wa)- ‘pour (repeatedly)’.

In CLuvian we find a stem lu-u-wa- ‘to pour’ (Pret3Pl lu-u-wa-an-da and syncopated lu-ū-un-ta). From an unattested infinitive *lā(h)una there is also a denominative stem lā(h)uni//līl(h)unāi- ‘to wash (away)’ (sense thus contra Puhvel 2001:23 et al., since the verb is used of both the thing cleansed [‘pediment’] and the thing removed [‘evil word’]). CLuvian also shows a reduplicated stem līlūwa- corresponding to Hittite līlḥu(wa)-. Finally, often overlooked is līlā(i)-* (P1Sg elhawi, P3Sg ilḥati, Pret1Sg ēlḥāha, Inv3Sg ēlḥādu) and the reduplicated hi-verb līlīlā-. Both of these also mean ‘to wash’ and cannot be separated from the other CLuvian forms.

The combined Hittite and Luvian evidence clearly points to an original ablauting hi-verb parallel to those in -i-, thus reconstructible as *lēh₂w-ei, *lēh₂w-énti (Jasanoff 2003:143) or *lēh₂w-ei, *lēh₂w-énti (Kloekhorst 2008:512; similarly Kimball 1999:398). Note that contra Kloekhorst CLuvian īlḥā(i)- confirms that *lēh₂w-w- contains a suffix or enlargement. Since Luvian ī in this environment cannot reflect historical short *e, īlḥā(i)- is apparently a lengthened-grade

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1 I follow the conventions of the CHD in using the sigla OH, MH, and NH and OS, MS, and NS to indicate respectively Old, Middle, and New Hittite compositions and manuscripts.

2 The alleged example *līlaḥhuēsnīt cited by Kloekhorst (2008:512), which can only be that of KUB 41.40 i 20 also read and restored thus by Puhvel (2001:22), does not exist. Read rather *līl(h)huēsnīt with Zeilfelder 2000:498, followed by Kloekhorst himself (2008:892).
iterative of the type of Latin cēlāre ‘to hide’ (CLuvian kīšā(i)- ‘to comb’ and widā(i)- ‘to strike’ are further likely examples, although their root vocalism is strictly speaking ambiguous). I find it more likely that īlḥā(i)- is back-formed from zero-grade *lḥ₂- rather than a reflex of a true “state I” *el-h₂- beside *l-el-h₂-, but the latter is in principle possible.

The analyses just cited of the Hittite verb reflect an assumed root etymology *leḥ₂- ‘to pour’, allegedly attested in Lat. lāma ‘puddle, swamp, morass’ (Schmitt-Brandt 1967:65). One should note that if Balto-Slavic forms like Lithuanian lomà ‘depression, hollow’ and Bulgarian lam ‘pit’ are cognate, their sense is fatal to derivation of the Latin from ‘to pour’, since the former have no necessary reference to water. However, the Balto-Slavic words are likely not related to the Latin: see Fraenkel 1962:385 and Derksen 2008:268.

The real difficulty with the derivation from an alleged root *leḥ₂- is that it cannot explain the overwhelming Hittite spelling with single -ḥ- (see the acknowledgement of the problem by Jasanoff [2003:143] with reference to the very complex account by Melchert 1994:72–3). A general “lenition” of voiceless obstruents after accented *ó as per Kloekhorst (2006 [2008]:132 and 2008:65, 98) is falsified by examples like Hitt. āppa ‘back’ ← *ópi (cf. HLuvian á-pi) and dākki ‘matches’ ← *dōk̑ei, while special Hittite lenition of just *h₂ after *ó (Kimball 1999:397) is entirely ad hoc (it is also contradicted by lāḥha- ‘campaign’ with the plene spelling la-a-lya-o requiring *lōh₂-o-). An explanation of the Hittite pattern of present third singular with single obstruent versus third plural with geminate in certain ħi-verbs like aki, akkanzi ‘die’ remains to be found.

The sense of Hittite lāḥ(h)u- and its general shape argue strongly for cognition with Latin lauō, Greek λαύω, etc. ‘to wash’, as already suggested by Sturtevant (1927:122 et alibi). See the characteristically pointed discussion by Puhvel (2001:23–4). This derivation has been blocked for most scholars by the prevailing assumption that *h₃ was lost or assimilated in all word-medial positions: see, e.g., Eichner 1980:129n41, Melchert 1994:72–4, and Kimball 1999:385.

2. Medial *h₃ in Hittite and Luvian reconsidered

Kloekhorst (2006:98–101 and 2008:836–9) has now demonstrated that no Luvom-Hittite verb stem *t̥arH- exists, only /taɾHʷ-/ ‘be able; conquer’, spelled tar-ḥu-, ta(r)-ru-uh-, tar-uh- (sic!), entirely parallel to e-ku-, e-uk- ‘drink’ /e-kuʷ-/ As he

3 That lāḥha- is a remade root noun and retains unlenited -ḥḥ- from instances of preconsonantal *-h₂- is highly unlikely.
cogently argues, evidence against the previous reading of the ambiguous tar-Vh- as tar-ah- with an “empty vowel” for /tarH-i/ is the complete absence of spellings τtar-ha-o, τtar-ћeli-o. One may compare the case of genuine /parH-i/ ‘to chase’ which beside P3Sg pár-ah-zi attests both P3Pl pár-ћa-an-zi and pár-ah-ћa-an-zi.4 We must therefore conclude with Kloekhorst that a sequence *h₂w developed to Proto-Anatolian *h=x, a unitary labialized fricative, spelled in Hittite C-št but also -u(--hV-).

This analysis has a number of important further implications. For those involving Lycian q I refer the reader to the treatment by Kloekhorst himself (2006: 98–101). What is crucial for our purposes is that CLuvian tatarh- cannot be derived from *terh₂r-. As correctly noted by Kloekhorst (2008:838), the attested sense ‘to break’ already made the derivation dubious: a=an DINGIR.MEŠ-inzi ăhha nātatta tatarḥandu “Let the gods break him like reeds” (KUB 9.6+ iii 26–27; compare Hittite duwaran zi ibid. iii 23). To overpower or conquer is not the same as to break. Kloekhorst persuasively derives the CLuvian verb rather from the root *terh₂- of Grk. τρέω ‘to wound’. The realization that some medial instances of *h₁ are preserved as Hittite -št also allows derivation of walt- ‘to strike’ from the root *welh₂- seen in Grk. ēάλω (Kloekhorst 2008:946). For the latter suggestion see already LIV 679. The precise conditions for preservation of medial *h₁ in Hittite remain to be worked out, but that it was in some cases maintained as -št can no longer be doubted.

3. A new proposal for lähu-

If PIE *h₂w developed into a unitary fortis/voiceless labialized PA *h=x and not all medial *h₂ were lost, then we may suppose that likewise *h₂w developed into a unitary lenis/voiced labialized PA *y=ʃ=x, spelled as expected -(V)-št-. One finds this idea in nuce already in Hovdhaugen 1971:122, but with a labialized PIE laryngeal, and in Kloekhorst 2006:100 n60 and 2008:512–3, but wrongly with *h₂w (leaving the overwhelmingly single spelling unexplained) and no etymology. I suggest explicitly for ‘to pour’:

 PIE strong stem *lélóh₁-C- > PA *lóy=- > Hittite lähu-, CLuvian là(h)u- (source of generalized Hittite lähu-)
 PIE weak stem *lh₂=C- > PIE *luh₂-C- > Hittite, CLuvian lu-a- (source of generalized CLuv. lu-a-wa-)

4 I am indebted to colleagues at the University of Chicago, who in response to my query sent me the draft article for this verb by Oğuz Soysal. Soysal independently came to the same conclusion as Kloekhorst on the same grounds (without explicit discussion of the phonetics).
The outcome of the prevocalic weak stem PIE *lh₃w-V- is uncertain. If the *l-
was kept non-syllabic due to the pressure of the other allomorphs, then there was
likely regular loss of *h₁ between consonants and thus *luw-V. A regular syllabi-
faction *lh₃w-V would have led to *alhw-V- (i.e., /aly*-l). In either case this al-
lo morph was unsurprisingly leveled out in both languages. Existence of the
strong stem lₘ(h)u- in Luvian is confirmed by the derived lₘ(h)uni-/lₘ(h)unjii- 'to
wash (away)' reflecting an infinitive *lₘ(h)una.

The assumption of a unitary originally lenis/voiced labialized velar predicts
most examples of Hittite lₘ₃h₃u- with geminate: by devoicing before -s- (Pret3Sg
lₘ₃h₃us and noun lₘ₃h₃u) and -t- (P2Sg laₘ₃h₃utti and P2Pl laₘ₃h₃uten, whence by
mechanical renewal lₘ₃h₃uwaten). Only the two examples of P3Sg laₘ₃h₃owai must
be taken as analogical. As already seen by Kloekhorst (2008:512), delabialization
of a labialized velar fricative is not implausible in Auslaut (compare Lat. nec, ac
from apocopated *nek*-arex* versus neque, atque). Hence the twice attested
Imv2Sg lₘh versus eku 'drink!' with analogical restoration. With only two exam-
pies of the imperative second singular attested for 'to pour' we cannot exclude
that likewise a restored *lₘh₃u may have existed.

Assumption of *h₃w (and of genuine lenited *h₂w) developing to y₃v also sim-
plifies the Luvian result. We need only assume the attested tendency for Luvian
-V₃wV- (NB with single -h-) to be reduced to -VwV-, for which see Melchert
1994:258. By the analysis suggested here this weakening actually consists of
deocclusion of a unitary y₃v to w, which is reminiscent of the regular deocclusion
of *g₃ > w in Luvian. CLuvian li-ₘuwa- is likely an independent creation from lu-
ₘu-wa-, based on a pattern productive in Luvian as well as Hittite, not an inherited
cognate of Hittite liₘ₃h₃u(w)- (contra Melchert, loc. cit.).

The Core Indo-European root *leu₃y may easily be back-formed from the
metathesized pre-consonantal zero-grade *lu₃z-. Compare *keh₃u- 'strike, split' >
Tocharian AB ko-ₘkaw- (< *kh₃u-) and via the metathesized zero-grade *ku₃u-
the new full grade *ku₃u- in Lith. kₘ₃a₃ju, ON hₘ₃gg₃va, etc. (see Jasanoff 1978:79–82,
Hackstein 1995:54–6 and LIV² 345–6).

4. The semantics of ‘to pour’ in PIE

Derivation of Anatolian ‘to pour (a liquid)’ from the same root as ‘to wash’ in the
Core Indo-European languages has implications for the semantics of ‘to pour’ in
PIE. The combined evidence suggests the following scenario, with three roots in
this semantic field in PIE. First, there was *leh₃w- ‘to pour’ liquid (only) beside
*h₁erH- ‘to wash’ (Hitt. árr-, TochA y₃r-). In Core Indo-European the latter was
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... lost, and *leh₂w- (in the form *leu₃h₂) was specialized to ‘to wash’ (contra Puhvel 2001:24–5).

Second, PIE had a root *sh₂eu- ‘to pour’ both liquid and dry materials (processual in meaning, as per García Ramón 2008:165). This root appears in Hittite as išt₃u(wa)- and (from the metathesized zero-grade *su₃h₂-C) also as šuh₃a-, both meaning ‘to pour, sprinkle’, restricted only to dry materials. Elsewhere it became specialized rather to liquid, whence Tocharian AB suu₃-swās- and Greek ὕη ‘to rain’ (thus with LIV 545).

Finally, there was PIE *g₃heu- ‘to pour’ liquid and dry materials (momentive, as per García Ramón 2008:157). The latter sense is reflected indirectly in Hittite kut₃- ‘wall’ and CLuvian kutt₃ašar₃al₃- ‘orthostat’, as per Puhvel 1997:299 and Kloekhorst 2008:499 (false García Ramón 2008:156). The original double sense is still preserved in Greek and Latin, with specialization to liquid only elsewhere in Core Indo-European (contra García Ramón 2008:160).

References


5 The attempt by Melchert (1984:99n49) to distinguish iterative išt₃u(wa)- ‘to sprinkle’ from šuh₃(a)- ‘pour (out)’ is not supported by the overall usage! Thus there is no evidence for an alleged reduplicated *h₂₃-sh₂-w-. Hittite išt₃u- is generalized from the prevocalic zero-grade: *sh₂w-ēnti, etc. We are dealing with a case of paradigm split, not two different prehistoric paradigms.


