The Hittite Syllabification of PIE *CuR and *$K^{u}R$

Alwin Kloekhorst (Leiden)

(1) Within the field of Hittite historical linguistics, it is quite commonly assumed that the PIE sequences *CuR and *$K^{u}R$ syllabify as Hitt. CuR in all circumstances (cf. Melchert 1994: 55; Kimball 1999: 249): *$k^{u}r$-*énti* > *kuranzi* 'they cut', *$g^{uh}n$-*énti* > *kunanzi* 'they kill', *k^{u}-$k^{u}rs$-*ent*- > *kukuršant*- 'slandering', etc.

Oettinger (1979: 119) proposes a different syllabification before a consonant, however, namely *$K^{u}RC$ > Hitt. $KuaRC$. This proposal was based on forms such as *kuuaraške/a*-, the *-ške/a*-imperfective of the verb *kuer-^{zi}/kur*- 'to cut', *kuuaške/a*-, the *-ške/a*-imperfective of *kuen-^{zi}/kun*- 'to kill', and *kuuakuuaraške/a*-, the *-ške/a*-imperfective of *kuk*(*k*)*urš*- 'to mutilate'. Nevertheless, under pressure of e.g. Melchert (1984: 52), who explicitly states that "a sequence *$CwR̥C$ does not syllabify as *$CwR̥C$ (> Hitt. $CwaRC$), but as $CuRC$", giving Hitt. *ḫurki*- 'wheel' < *h_2urg-*i*- as an example, Oettinger has retracted this view in 1992: 218.

(2) The Hittite imperfectives in *-ške/a*- clearly go back to the PIE present formation in *-*sk̂e/o*-. In PIE, this suffix is always attached to the zero-grade of the verbal root: PIE *$g^{u}m$-*sk̂é/ó*- 'to go' > Gk. βάσκω, Skt. *gácchati*, Av. *jasaiti*; PIE *$prk̂$-*sk̂é/ó*- 'to ask' > Skt. *pṛccháti*, Arm. *harcʿi*, Lat. *poscō*, OHG *forscōn*. In Hittite, we also find examples of this practice: e.g. *zikke/a*- (imperf. of *dai-^{i} ti*- 'to put') < *$d^{h}h_1$-*sk̂é/ó*-; *appeške/a*- (imperf. of *epp-^{zi}/app*- 'to take') < *h_1p-*sk̂é/ó*-. Moreover, in Hittite it is still a synchronic rule that imperfectives in *-ške/a*- are derived from the weak stem of the verb[1].

(3) If indeed the sequences *CuR and *$K^{u}R$ always syllabify as Hitt. CuR (before vowel as well as consonant), the above-mentioned imperfectives *kuuaraške/a*-, *kuuaške/a*- and *kuuakuuaraške/a*- cannot go back to the morphologically expected formation *$K^{u}R$-*sk̂e/o*-. Nevertheless, it is also difficult to assume a secondary, analogical origin of these forms. If we look at the paradigm of *kuen-^{zi}* 'to kill', for instance, we find three stems: *kue*(*n*)-, *kun*- and *kuua*(*n*)-. The stems *kue*(*n*)- and

1 This is the reason that besides *kuuaraške/a*- and *kuuakuuaraške/a*- we also find the imperfectives *kuraške/a*-, *kureške/a*- and *kukkuraške/a*-, *kukkureške/a*-, which are younger formations built on the synchronic weak stems *kur*- and *kukkurš*-.

kun- are common throughout the paradigm, whereas *kuu̯a(n)-* can only be found in the imperfective. The same goes for the stems *kuu̯ar-* and *kuu̯akuu̯ar-*: within their paradigms they occur in the imperfective only. This rules out the possibility that these forms have been secondarily introduced into the imperfective: there simply is no model on the analogy of which they could have been created. Scholars like Melchert (1994: 168), Oettinger (1992: 218) and Kimball (1999: 249) state that the imperfectives in *Cu̯aRške/a-* must reflect **K$^{u̯}$eR-sk̂e/o-*, i.e. forms in which the full-grade stem **K$^{u̯}$eR-* has been introduced. Although indeed in isolation a pre-form **K$^{u̯}$eRsk̂e/o-* by regular soundlaws would yield Hitt. **Ku̯aRške/a-* (showing **eRCC* > *aRCC*, cf. Melchert 1994: 136-7), this would not have happened as part of the paradigm. For instance, in the verb *kuen-*^{zi} 'to kill', 2sg. **g^{uh}énsi* and 3sg. **g^{uh}énti* should regularly have yielded Hitt. ***kuu̯a(n)ši* and ***kuu̯anzi*. Instead, we find *kueši* and *kuenzi* in which the *-e-* was analogically restored. If the imperfective was indeed secondarily formed as **g^{uh}en-sk̂e/o-*, I do not understand why this form would not have been restored to ***kue(n)ške/a-* either.

(4) Since the imperfectives *kuu̯araške/a-*, *kuu̯ašk̂e/a-* and *kuu̯akuu̯araške/a-* cannot be explained as secondary formations within their paradigms, I conclude that they must be archaic and that they therefore must show the phonetic outcomes of **k$^{u̯}$r-sk̂é/ó-*, **g^{uh}n-sk̂é/ó-* and **k^{u}o-k$^{u̯}$rs-sk̂é/ó-*, respectively. The difference in syllabification between these forms and e.g. *u̯̯urki-* is in my view explained by the fact that in the imperfectives the sequence **K$^{u̯}$R* is followed by two consonants, whereas in *u̯̯urki-* only one consonant is following. I would therefore like to propose the following rules of syllabification for Hittite: the PIE sequences **CuRV/*K$^{u̯}$RV* and **CuRCV/*K$^{u̯}$RCV* syllabify as Hitt. *CuRV* and *CuRCV*, respectively, but the PIE sequence **CuRCC/*K$^{u̯}$RCC* syllabifies as Hitt. *Cu̯aRCC*. It should be noted that this distribution nicely fits the fact that PIE **eRV* and **eRCV* yield Hitt. *eRV* and *eRCV*, whereas PIE **eRCC* > Hitt. *aRCC* (cf. Melchert 1994: 136-7).

(5) This solution also gives a new insight into the problem of *duu̯arni-*^{zi}*/duu̯arn-* 'to break'. This verb is generally connected with Skt. *dhvar-*^{i} 'to damage, to hurt' but the exact reconstruction is unclear: Eichner's reconstruction **d^{h}u̯orneu̯é-* (1973: 75-6) should have yielded ***tarne-* (cf. *tān* 'for the second time' < **du̯oi̯om* for the loss of **u̯* in **Tu̯o*), whereas Melchert's reconstruction **d^{h}u̯erneu̯e/o-* (1984: 36) should have yielded ***tu̯erne-* (cf. e.g. **k$^{u̯}$ermi* > Hitt. *kuermi* 'I cut' for the retention of **e* in **erCV*). A better approach is Oettinger's (1979: 151), who reconstructs *duu̯arnizzi/duu̯arnanzi* as a nasal-infixed formation **d^{h}ur-né-h$_1$-ti*, **d^{h}ur-n-h$_1$-énti*. According to the above proposed syllabification rules, these forms

would regularly result in **durnezzi/duu̯arnanzi*. If we assume that the stem of the plural spread throughout the paradigm (compare e.g. *šunnai/šunnanzi* 'to fill' < **su-nó-H-ei/*su-n-H-énti*, or *zinnizzi/zinnanzi* < **ti-né-h_1-ti* / **ti-n-h_1-énti*, where the geminate *-nn-* from the plural spread throughout the paradigm), we arrive at the situation as attested, namely *duu̯arnizzi/duu̯arnanzi*.

(6) There is one verb that seemingly contradicts the development *$K^{u}RCC$ > Hitt. *Cu̯arCC*, namely *gulš-^{zi}* 'to carve, to engrave', which is generally derived from the root *$k^{u}els$- (Gk. τέλσον 'furrow', Skt. *karṣati* 'to plow'). Its singular forms, 1. sg. pres. *gulšmi* (*gul-aš-mi*), 3. sg. pres. *gulšzi* (*gul-aš-zi*) go back to virtual *$k^{u}ls$-*mi* and *$k^{u}ls$-*ti* and therefore seem to show a syllabification *$K^{u}RCC$ > *CuRCC*. Nevertheless, it is quite obvious that this verb, like any *mi*-inflecting verb, must have had *e/Ø*-ablaut originally: *k^{u}*éls-ti/*k^{u}*ls-énti*. The 3.pl.-form regularly yielded Hitt. *gulšanzi*, the stem of which must have spread throughout the paradigm, replacing expected **kualšzi* by *gulšzi*. Since the forms showing *gulšC*° are of secondary origin, they do not contradict the development *$K^{u}RCC$ > *Cu̯aRCC* as unravelled above.

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