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approximately at the time of the invention of the Ugaritic alphabet, several sound shifts affected Ugaritic: at first, preceding the invention of the alphabet, *d* shifted to *ṣ*, and, accordingly, was not represented in the alphabet (with the exception of archaic 75, where it is indirectly marked by *z*). Immediately after its invention *ṣ* coalesced with *d* and was only in some special words, and in 75/77, marked by its special sign, which had become, as a rule, the sign of a similar foreign sound. Even later was the disappearance of *z*, being, as a rule, represented by a special sign. Some texts, however, exhibit its shift to *g*, one,

its coalescence with *t*. This latter feature is also reflected by text 77, which applies *z* for original *t*, thus clearly attesting its intentional archaic character. At any rate, the shifts *ṣ* to *d*, *z* to *g/t* clearly differ from those attested in the Canaanite dialects (*ṣ* to *z*, *z* to *ṣ*) and corroborate Friedrich's theory that the Canaanite dialects did not constitute a homogeneous body from their very beginnings, but developed in historical times through parallel development and mutual contact.

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An Aspect of Hittite Use of the Hurrian Suffix -ta

The Hurrian directive ending *-ta* apparently occurs in the nominative-accusative plural of a number of Hittite neuter nouns. Johannes Friedrich has called attention to these forms, remarking that the suffix is used as if it were the case-ending.¹ Recently I cited evidence which seemed to confirm this suggestion.² The facts presented then concerning the suffix may be briefly summarized as follows. With the exception of a single uncertain case among the *u*-stems, *-ta* is confined in Hittite to stems in *-i*.³ The neuter plural of Hittite *i*-stems contained an inherited opposition between nouns in *-i*, identical to the neuter singular ending, and adjectives in *-a* < **-aya*. The contrast has been somewhat obscured through analogy due probably in part to the ambiguity of *-i*, but remains fairly well defined in the texts. It stems from the familiar insertion of *-a* before the stem of *i*- and *u*-stem adjectives and the loss of [y] between like vowels. *-iya*, corresponding to *-uwa* among *u*-stem nouns, is confined among *i*-stems to the dative singular, where the usual Hittite ending *-i* also produced

ambiguity.⁴ The restriction of *-ta* to nouns probably owed its origin to little more than the fact that nouns are in general much more often borrowed than adjectives. Whatever its cause, however, it provided a means of resolving the ambiguity produced by the inherited substantive ending without obliterating the distinction between noun and adjective usually maintained among the other cases. The potential usefulness of the Hurrian suffix appears to have been partially realized, for among a total of fourteen or seventeen *i*-stem neuter nouns for which a nominative-accusative plural is attested, *-ta* occurs with five or seven,⁵ while seven or eight take *-i* and four the inherited

⁴ A single possible exception to this statement, *ḫalwatiṣa*, of uncertain form and meaning, occurs preceded by *Glossenkeile*.

⁵ These figures, as well as those stated elsewhere, are based on the forms included in Friedrich, *Hethitisches Wörterbuch* (Heidelberg, 1952-66). The reason for the present variation is uncertainty as to whether *-ta* occurred in the plural of *kunzi(tta)*- 'holy symbol (?)' and *šuri(ta)*- '?' and whether *GIŠkurtali*^{H.L.A.} is taken as plural of *kurtal* or *kurtali*, both attested in the meaning of 'a receptacle'. Although the conclusions indicated remain the same in every instance, the figures given here are not always precisely the same as in the previous article because of addition of material from Friedrich's third supplement of 1966, not previously available.

¹ Johannes Friedrich, *Hethitisches Elementarbuch*² (Heidelberg, 1960) I, 60.

² Brosman, *JAOS* 84 (1964) 344-8.

³ The article mentioned above (fn. 2) dealt only with *i*- and *u*-stems. It is possible, however, to add that neuter plural *-ta* does not occur outside these classes.

adjectival ending *-a*.⁶ Three of its five certain occurrences are with words clearly borrowed from Hurrian, for formally identical Hurrian etyma are attested. That the other two words, *ḫazziwi* 'rite(?)' and ^{GIS}*iri(m)pi* 'cedarwood (?)' are also of Hurrian origin is plausible, for their form seems appropriate and they apparently belong to semantic categories in which borrowing might be expected. It is therefore probable that *-ta* was used only with Hurrian loans. For this reason it appears still to fall one step short of being fully incorporated in the Hittite inflectional system. That it was regarded by its users as signifying plurality where it does occur is indicated, however, by the manner in which they employed the plural determinative *ḪI.A*. *ḪI.A* is used with all nouns taking the ambiguous *i*- plural, with all but one exclusively, but is not once written with forms containing *-ta*. Of the four substantive *a*- plurals, half occur with *ḪI.A* and half without it.

If appearances concerning the Hurrian suffix are to be believed, its use seems to conflict with a rather fundamental view regarding Hittite grammar. Heinz Kronasser has stated that Hittite is clearly on the way to becoming genderless through restriction of the neuter.⁷ He suggests that this development may be due to the influence of Hattic and Hurrian, both genderless languages. The comment of Friedrich that the neuter is already in an advanced process of decline seems to contain a similar implication, particularly since it follows immediately upon a description of the prevailing belief in loss of a masculine/feminine distinction.⁸ The process by which an inflectional suffix is indirectly "borrowed" from one language by another is relatively rare and requires intensive influence of one vocabulary upon the other. That it should have taken place in Hittite is, of course, quite plausible, for the Hittite vocabulary has been greatly expanded by loanwords. Moreover, Hurrian is a likely donor, for of known influences on

Hittite aside from those of other members of the Anatolian family, its probably has been greatest. It seems unlikely, however, that such a process should be on the verge of accomplishment through borrowing into a dying category. This could be used as an argument against hasty assumptions concerning the significance of *-ta* in Hittite. However, a quick count of the distribution between genders of *i*- stem nouns as a whole suggests that it is the other view which should be questioned. In the dictionary of Friedrich and its three supplements *i*- stems of masculine or common gender number 198 and neuters 91. These totals include forms preceded by *Glossenkeile*. The removal of nouns before which a *Glossenkeil* occurs at least once is of little consequence, for the figures then become 183 and 87. On the basis of the usual assumption that inherited masculines and feminines are combined in the Hittite common gender, the ratio of barely more than two-to-one in either case would indicate that the neuter has held its own even if we began by arbitrarily assigning an equal number of words to each gender. Since, however, Indo-European evidence points to a relatively small number of neuter *i*- stems,⁹ it appears that far from declining, neuters were considerably more abundant among the *i*- stems in Hittite than in Proto-Indo-European. Within the same category evidence of a tendency to eliminate the neuter commencing after the initial impact of Hurrian influence is not particularly great. Twenty-three *i*- stem nouns of variable gender were found, of which two are preceded by *Glossenkeile*. Since these forms were not included in the figures given earlier, the total in which they are contained is 312.

The implications of the relative frequency of neuter *i*- stems and the corresponding conclusions of this note are two, each concerning a question otherwise separate. First, what should have been regarded as a serious obstacle to the proposed transfer of *-ta* through borrowing appears to have

⁶ One noun occurs with both *-ta* and *-i* and another with *-a* and *-i*.

⁷ Heinz Kronasser, *Vergleichende Laut- und Formenlehre des Hethitischen* (Heidelberg, 1956) pp. 106, 138.

⁸ Friedrich, *Hethitisches Elementarbuch*² I, 42-3.

⁹ Karl Brugmann, *Grundriss der vergleichenden Grammatik der indogermanischen Sprachen*² (Strassburg, 1897-1916) II, I, 173-4.

been removed. Second, the same evidence suggests that previously published accounts of the impending elimination of gender are, if not inaccurate, oversimplifications. In connection with the first point it seems reasonable to conclude that the apparent feasibility of the transfer of *-ta* may be combined with the evidence mentioned earlier concerning the plural determinative *ḪI.A* and the inherited distribution of *i*-stem endings to justify elimination of whatever exceptional degree of tentativeness may still cling to the original proposal of Friedrich that *-ta* was indeed employed as a plural case-ending in Hittite. It should be stressed that there is intended no suggestion that the suffix had in Hurrian any meaning other than that commonly ascribed to it. It is assumed that the association with plurality arose in Hittite. That *-ta* is held to have had different meanings in Hittite and Hurrian does not in itself prevent the view that it was transferred through borrowing, for it is as true of suffixes transferred indirectly in borrowed words as of words actually borrowed that the meaning need not be the same in both languages involved. Friedrich has also proposed that *-ti* in the Hittite dative singular is the same *-ta* altered to correspond to the usual form of the dative in Hittite.¹⁰ If this suggestion be accepted,

¹⁰ Friedrich, *Hethitisches Elementarbuch*² I, 59.

the English derivational suffix *-ette* provides an approximate parallel of the treatment of *-ta* to the extent that it shows a split in the meaning of a "borrowed" suffix involving a grammatical category not possessed by the recipient language, for *-ette*, as either a purely diminutive or purely feminine suffix differs in each case from the use of its source, Fr. *-ette*, as a suffix forming feminine diminutives with or without corresponding masculines in *-et*. With respect to the second point, it must be noted that the *i*-stems are but one class among several. Moreover, they are not isolated. For example, forms occur which indicate that there have been transfers between the *i*-stems and *a*-stems in *-(i)ia*.¹¹ The evidence presented here is therefore not sufficient to warrant general inferences regarding the status of the neuter. The only definite conclusion which can safely be drawn is that a thorough survey of nouns of all declensions and semantic categories will be required before the basic descriptive facts concerning Hittite gender can be considered established.

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¹¹ Edgar H. Sturtevant, *A Comparative grammar of the Hittite language*² (New Haven, 1951) I, 76, 85; Kronasser, *op. cit.*, p. 113.