

SPELLING OF INITIAL /a-/ IN HIEROGLYPHIC LUWIAN

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It is a great pleasure and honor to take part in this tribute to David Hawkins, who has made unequalled contributions to our understanding of the language and history of the Luwians. The present essay not only would have been impossible without the magnificent corpus of Iron-Age Hieroglyphic Luwian inscriptions that he has provided us, but also builds directly on an insight of his. I regret that the available evidence does not permit a fully satisfying solution to the problem addressed, but hope that our honorand will feel that my efforts have advanced the state of the question.

Hawkins (2003:159-161) first noted in Empire (second-millennium) texts the peculiar practice he has dubbed “initial-*a*-final”, by which the tall sign *a* representing initial /a-/ in some words is written after rather than in front of the other signs.¹ Thus *mi-sa-a* for /amis/ ‘my’ (EMİRGAZİ altars §4) or *wa/i-mu-a* for the sequence of initial conjunction and clitics /a=wa=mu/ (YALBURT 2, §§2,3).² Hawkins (2006:12-13) affirmed continuation of this practice in some texts of the first-millennium. I will henceforth adopt his convention of representing such spellings as **a-mi-sa* and **a-wa/i-mu*.

An exhaustive survey of all HLuwian texts in Hawkins (2000) allows a much broader claim: the practice of “initial-*a*-final” remains in force in all areas where HLuwian texts are attested through the early 9th century: Karkamiš (KARKAMIŠ A1*a*, A1*b*, A2+3, A4*b*, A4*d*, A11*a*, A11*b*+*c*, A12, A13*d*, A14*a*, A14*b*, A16*b*, A18*d*, A20*a*, A23, A25*a*; KELEKLİ), Tell Ahmar (TELL AHMAR 1, 2, 5, 6, ALEPPO 2, BOROWSKI 3), Maraş (MARAŞ 8), Malatya (GÜRÜN, KÖTÜKALE, İSPEKÇÜR, DARENDE, IZGIN 1 & 2), and Aleppo (BABYLON 1).³ Its appearance in the Emirgazi, Südburg, and Yalburt Empire-era inscriptions and from Malatya in the north to Karkamiš and Tell Ahmar in the south strongly suggests that it was employed throughout the region where HLuwian was written. The practice has disappeared entirely by the mid 9th century, including most significantly in all the areas cited above where it was in use through the early 9th century.

¹ As Hawkins indicates, the phenomenon had previously been identified on seals. See also now Hawkins *apud* Herbordt 2005:291. While the use on seals surely is relevant to the original motivation for the practice, I must due to constraints of time and space limit my discussion to HLuwian texts.

² Since a bound transcription of HLuwian is at best problematic and at worst misleading, I will consistently use // to indicate phonological interpretations of HLuwian words. The use of voiceless and voiced symbols for stops should be taken as conventional.

³ It is important to stress that Hawkins’ chronological division of the corpus is for the most part based on historical (primarily prosopographical) evidence. While I have surveyed all texts in his corpus, I have for obvious reasons placed decidedly lesser weight on texts whose dating is uncertain or rests merely on factors such as artistic style, form of the script, or linguistic features (such as rhotacism). The full data base used is available at: <http://www.linguistics.ucla.edu/people/Melchert/>. Click on the link “HLuwianInitiala”.

The overwhelming evidence for the practice in the older period assures us that the few apparent exceptions represent aberrations. For *wa/i-tà* in EMİRGAZİ §12 see Hawkins 2003:161. Likewise faulty are the isolated *wa/i-mu-ta* in KARKAMIŞ A2+3 §6 and *wa/i-ta* in ALEPPO 2 §6. The photo and drawing in Hawkins (2000) show that *wa/i* in KARKAMIŞ A4b §5 (with a blank space beneath!) is erroneous for *wa/i-a* (on which see below). In KARKAMIŞ A2+3 §8 read **a-mi-ya-za* with the drawing against Hawkins 2000:109. The reading *mi-ya-za* in IZGIN 1 §4 is less than assured. Recognition of “initial-*a*-final” also necessarily leads to new readings of certain sequences: **a-pa-ti-pa-wa/i-ta | za-sa* in KARKAMIŞ A2+3 §11 (against Hawkins 2000:109), **a-mi-zi *a-ta/i₄-ni-zi* and **a-mu-pa-wa/i *a-ta/i₄-na-za* in KARKAMIŞ A23 §§4-5 (against Hawkins 2000:119). As shown by Hawkins’ drawing, in KARKAMIŞ A1a §38 the *a*-sign is positioned following *pa-ti-ha-wa/i* and under *pa* so as to serve for both **a-pa-ti-ha-wa/i* and **a-pa*.

Confirmation of the consistent use of “initial-*a*-final” in the early texts of the first millennium is important in that it allows us to extend modestly the list of words for which its use is assured and validates certain patterns that are merely suggestive in Empire texts. In addition to its use for sequences of clause-initial conjunction /*a*-/ plus quotative particle /-*wa*-/ plus further clitics, “initial-*a*-final” is also attested for: the stem /*ami*-/ ‘my’ (but not /*ama*-/!), /*amu*-/ ‘I, me’, /*aba*-/ ‘that’ (and accented third person pronoun), /*apan*-/ ‘(from) behind’ (EMİRGAZİ altars §22), /*apara*-/ ‘afterwards’ (EMİRGAZİ altars §3, as per Hawkins 2003:160), /*as*-/ ‘to be’, /*aduna*-/ ‘enemy’ (see n. 16 below), and probably /*addwa*-/ ‘evil’ (**a-MALUS-wa/i-za* TELL AHMAR 6 §30).⁴

It is important to stress that in the Empire period the use of “initial-*a*-final” is fundamentally optional. We find *a-wa/i-mi* (YALBURT 11,§2) vs. **a-wa/i-mi* (YALBURT 10,§2), *a-wa/i-mu* (YALBURT 6,§2 etc.) vs. **a-wa/i-mu* (YALBURT 2,§§2-3), and *a-mi* (EMİRGAZİ block A,1.3; B,1.2) vs. **a-mi-sa* (EMİRGAZİ block A,1.1; B,1.5). It is thus not surprising also to find occasional exceptions to “initial-*a*-final” in early first-millennium texts and even later: *a-wa/i-tà* (IZGIN 2 §2), *a-wa/i-tà* (MARAS 4 §4), *a-mi-sa* (TOPADA §19).

Examination of the spelling of initial /*a*-/ in the Empire period texts also leaves no doubt that the use of “initial-*a*-final” is at that period aesthetically motivated and has *no* linguistic significance. As is well established, HLUwian inscriptions on stone are typically written in horizontal lines or “registers” separated by line-dividers. The texts run alternately left-to-right and right-to-left in *boustrophedon* style. Individual words are written vertically top to bottom roughly in columns, with the shape of the component signs sometimes dictating an arrangement at odds with the order of reading.⁵ There is a *horror vacui*, and signs are usually distributed evenly through the available space (see plates 14-17 of KARKAMIŞ A11b and A11c in Hawkins 2000 for a representative specimen). The sign *a* is used from the Empire

⁴ Thus with caution also Hawkins (2006:13). This example is not entirely assured, but TELL AHMAR 6 makes no use elsewhere of *a* as a mere space-filler.

⁵ Aesthetic factors affecting the configuration of signs in texts are also well-known in Egyptian hieroglyphs (Ritner 1996:80-81) and Mayan glyphs (Macri 1996:178-179).

period onward as a mere space-filler, and some later texts also use the sign for *i* for this purpose.⁶

The relevance of the preceding to the spelling of initial /a-/ is that the relatively tall sign for *a* plus *one* other sign comfortably fills one vertical column in a given horizontal line, given the typical scale of signs used, but *a* plus two or more signs often does not. For this reason the EMİRGAZİ block writes *a-mi* (A,1.3; B,1.5) for /ami/ ‘my’ (dat.-loc. sg.), but **a-mi-sa* (A,1.1; B,1.2) for /amis/ ‘my’ (nom. sg. com.). Likewise on the EMİRGAZİ altars the sequence of initial conjunction plus quotative particle /a=wa/ ([áwa]) is written consistently *a-wa/i* (§§2,17,21,23), but /a=wa=an/ ([áwan]) with added clitic pronoun /-an/ (acc. sg. com.) is spelled **a-wa/i-na* (§§14,29). There manifestly cannot be any linguistic difference between the respective disyllabic forms with the same number of syllables and same accentuation. There is in particular no possibility of aphaeresis in **a-mi-sa* and **a-wa/i-na* (see already Hawkins 2003:161).

Naturally, scribes can choose to shorten the sign *a* and permit the normal order of writing even with more than one following sign. In the 12th-century inscription KARAHÖYÜK the scribe shortens and slants the *a* so that all three-sign sequences are written in the normal order: not only *a-wa/i* (§§3,5,13), but also *a-wa/i-sa* (§24), *a-wa/i-mu* (§12), *a-mi-zi/a* (§13), *a-sa-ti* (§§20-21), etc. However, *four-sign* sequences are felt to be too long, and here the scribe employs “initial-*a*-final”: **a-wa/i-mi-tá* (§11) and **a-mi-i(a)-ti* (§15). In the YALBURT inscription the scribe freely manipulates the size and orientation of *a* and other signs in the respective sequences so as to produce alternates with and without “initial-*a*-final” (see the photos and drawings in Poetto 1993).⁷

The space motivation for the contrast between *a-wa/i* and **a-wa/i+* is sometimes still discernible in texts of the early first millennium (*a-wa/i* still typically fills an entire vertical column). Unsurprisingly, however, once “initial-*a*-final” becomes conventionalized it continues to be used even when it would not be necessary: the final *a*-sign is often reduced and written in the same column as the other signs of the word, rather than following in full size and occupying a column by itself, as earlier.

It cannot be coincidental that the two-sign word /anda/ ‘in(to)’ is also spelled with absolute consistency *a-tá* or *a-ta* throughout the history of HLuwian, never with “initial-*a*-final”. Here, however, a slightly different aesthetic applies from that in *a-wa/i*. In texts through the early 9th century the spelling is always *a-tá*. The *a*-sign is either shortened so that it and the following *tá* symmetrically divide the vertical space (e.g. KARKAMIŞ A14a §§6-7, A1a §§37-38) or the two signs are made into a sort of ligature (e.g. IZGIN 1 §§4-5, §18). Both practices reappear in later texts (e.g. ADIYAMAN 1 §4 and HAMA 4 §10, §12

⁶ For early examples of space-filling *a* (conventionally transliterated as ‘) see *á-wa/i+ra/i-na-*(URBS) (YALBURT 13,§3) and *la-mi-ni-* (KARAHÖYÜK §1). Contrary to my own previous impression, there is no connection between the demise of “initial-*a*-final” and the use of the *a*-sign as a space-filler.

⁷ The fact that some inscribed blocks of the Yalburt inscription have more vertical space than others naturally also plays a role in the use of “initial-*a*-final”.

respectively), and the former is also extended to the newer spelling *a-ta* (e.g. KARKAMIŠ A6 §7).⁸

That “initial-*a*-final” has *no* linguistic significance is confirmed by the spelling practices that replace it from the middle of the 9th century. I treat first the simpler case of clause-initial sequences of conjunction /a-/ plus quotative particle /-wa-/ with and without further clitics. In all texts from the mid 9th century onward the sequence /a=wa/ alone continues to be spelled *a-wa/i* with the normal order of signs. This is the overwhelmingly regular spelling in all regions. We also do find *beside* normal *a-wa/i* occasional instances of *wa/i-a* from a variety of regions (Cilicia, ÇINEKÖY §9; Karkamiš, TÜNP 1 §6; Malatya, PALANGA §§2,7,10; Amuq, JISR EL HADID frag. 1 l.2, KIRÇOĞLU §2, TELL TAYINAT 2 frag. 3 l. 3 and frag. 10a-b l. 5; Tabal, ÇALAPVERDİ 1 §3). This spelling cannot be regarded as “initial-*a*-final” in the strict sense, because the latter had been entirely abandoned by this time. We must regard *wa/i-a* for *a-wa/i* rather as an imitation of the by then standard spelling of /a-/ + /-wa-/ plus further clitics as *wa/i-sa*, *wa/i-na*, etc. (see immediately below).⁹

All sequences of /a-/ + /-wa-/ plus *further* clitics are from the mid 9th century regularly spelled simply as *wa/i-X(-Y-Z)* with no overt indication of the initial /a-/ at all. This practice is so pervasive that I forgo giving extensive examples.¹⁰ I focus here only on two crucial points. First, the consistent spelling of /a=wa/ ([áwa]) as *a-wa/i* beside equally consistent *wa/i-sa* and *wa/i-na* for /a=wa=as/ ([áwas]) ‘and he/she/it’ (nom. sg. com.) and /a=wa=an/ ([áwan]) ‘and him/her/it’ (acc. sg. com.) shows conclusively that the latter sequences have not undergone aphaeresis even in the latest period, contrary to previous claims. There is absolutely no plausible mechanism by which [áwas/n] can undergo aphaeresis while [áwa] does not.¹¹

Further confirmation of the continued reality of the initial /a-/ is furnished by occasional exceptional spellings in texts after the mid 9th century: in SULTANHAN (Tabal, ca. 740-730

⁸ The configuration of *a-tá* in the Empire inscription SÜDBURG §4a is unique, with the two signs sloping one atop the other. I read this clause-opening sequence as /anda/ in the well-attested sense ‘in addition, furthermore’ against Hawkins 1995:35. His interpretation as an “unattached” clitic /-ada/ ‘them’ is highly unlikely in a text that writes no other clitics.

⁹ We naturally find a few instances of /a=wa/ spelled with alternate signs for *wa/i*: *a-wa/i₅* (TOPADA §29), *a-wá/i* (KARATEPE §XXXII, Ho). If genuine, the spelling *á-wá/i* in KAYSERİ §2 with the *á*-sign is absolutely unique.

¹⁰ I do wish to make explicit that the contrast of *a-wa/i* vs. *wa/i-X(-Y-Z)* for all other sequences is found in every region: Cilicia, Karkamiš, Tell Ahmar, Maraş, Malatya, Commagene, Amuq, Aleppo, Hama, Tabal, and the Assur letters. Naturally, one does find some examples of *wa/i-X(-Y)-'* where the final *a*-sign is a mere space-filler. That it is now filling this role and no longer represents “initial-*a*-final” is confirmed by the use of the *i*-sign likewise as a space-filler at the end of such sequences: *wa/i-tu-u-ta-ⁱ* (ISKENDRUN §4; cf. *ibid.* §7 without).

¹¹ The alleged aphaeresis has never, of course, made any sense in linguistic terms, since CLuwian *a-at-ta* for /a=ta/ and *a-am-ma-aš* for /a=mmas/ with lengthening prove that the clause-initial conjunction was fully accented.

BCE) we find beside each other *wa/i-sá* (§3) beside *a-wa/i-sa* (§5) for /a=wa=as/ and *wa/i-na-*' (§12) beside *a-wa/i-na* (§4) for /a=wa=an/.¹² Given this manifest equivalence for two-syllable sequences, we must likewise interpret not only *a-wa/i-tà* (SULTANHAN §45) but also *wa/i-tà* (*ibid.* §44!) as /a=wa=ada/ ([áwada]) ‘and it’ (nom.-acc. sg. neut.). The continued reality of accented initial /a-/ in all such clause-initial sequences is confirmed by further late spellings such as: *a-wa/i-mi* (HÍSARCIK §2), *a-wa/i-ta* (/a=wa=ta/ with particle /-ta/) (BULGARMADEN §2), and *a-wa/i-mu-ta* (PORSUK §5).

The late spelling of other words that show “initial-*a*-final” through the early 9th century differs radically from that just described for sequences with clause-initial conjunction /a-, and there is regional variation. However, by far the dominant pattern is to spell all the other words with the initial *á*-sign, which I must emphasize was never used for them prior to the mid 9th century.¹³ This is the standard usage in all securely datable late texts from Karkamiš:¹⁴ *á-mi-* ‘my’, *á-mu* ‘I, me’, *á-pa-* ‘that; he, she’, *á-sa-* ‘to be’. Likewise in Maraş (*á-mi-* and (“POST”) *á-pa(+)* ‘afterward’), Malatya (*á-mi-* and *á-pa-* ‘he’), and Hama (*á-mi-*, *á-mu*, and *á-pi-* ‘he’).¹⁵ Such spellings are also the norm in Tabal (*á-mi-*, *á-mu*, *á-pa-*, *á-pa-na* ‘after, behind’, *á-ru-ni-zi* ‘enemies’,¹⁶ *á-sa-*) and in Cilicia (*á-mi-*, *á-mu*, *á-pa-*, *á-sa-*).¹⁷

However, the last two regions named show some limited but highly significant variation. The unusual sign use of the TOPADA inscription from Tabal is well-known (see Hawkins 2000:460-461), and we can attach no significance to the unique spelling *a_x-mi-ya+ra/i* in TOPADA §10 with a sign attested nowhere else. However, the occurrence of *a-mi-sa* in TOPADA §19 beside regular *á-mi-sa₄* in §17 cannot be so easily dismissed. Even more telling is the striking variation in TOPADA §§37-38 in a repeated formula: *a-pa-sa-na VAS-tara/i-i-na á-pa-sa₇-[ha]* TERRA-REL<+ra/i>-na...*á-pa-sa-na VAS-tara/i-na a-pa-sa-ha DOMUS-na-zi/a* ‘his person and his land...his person and his house’. I do not find it remotely credible that there is any linguistic difference in the variant spellings of /abassa-/ ‘his’ by the

¹² The final sign in *wa/i-na-*' clearly must be taken as a space-filler, not as an instance of “initial-*a*-final”. Compare *a-wa/i-*' in SULTANHAN §16 and §43, beside *a-wa/i passim*.

¹³ I am aware of only two exceptions to this statement. We find *á-mi-na* ‘my’ (acc. sg. com.) in KELEKLİ §2 and probably *á-pa-si-zi* ‘his’ in ALEPPO 2 §23 (see Hawkins 2000:238 on the latter).

¹⁴ That is, from the “House of Astiruwas”: KARKAMIŠ A6, A7, A15b, A24, A31, A4a, and CEKKE. It is also prevalent in less securely datable texts from Karkamiš, but see further below on other late Karkamiš texts.

¹⁵ Mid 9th-century texts from Hama have replaced the stem /aba-/ with /abi-/ in the demonstrative/third person pronoun.

¹⁶ I interpret this word in SULTANHAN §9 as a rhotacized variant of the word spelled earlier as **a-ta/i₄-ni-zi/*a-ta/i₄-na-za* and read the latter as /adunintsi~adunants/, modifying an idea of I. Yakubovich (pers. comm.). Dr. Yakubovich bears of course no responsibility for my formulation. For his own analysis see Rieken and Yakubovich in this volume.

¹⁷ The relatively short ÇINEKÖY text is consistent: *á-mi-ya-ti* (§§2,9), *á-mu* (§9), and *á-sa-tá* (/asanta/ Pret3Pl) (§8).

signs *a* and *á*. Given this example, we must also take seriously the alternate spelling *a-sa-ta* ‘were’ (KARATEPE §XX, Ho, vs. regular *á-sa-ta* in Hu) *a-pa-ri+i* ‘on that side’ (KARATEPE §XXXI, Ho vs. *á-pa-ti-i* in Hu),¹⁸ and the spelling *a-mi-ya-za* ‘my’ (dat.-loc. pl.) (KARATEPE §XXXV, Hu).¹⁹

The evidence just presented shows two things. First, the practice of replacing “initial-*a*-final” with an *á*-sign after the mid 9th century was not universal. There was a competing usage with an initial *a*-sign. Second, this variation argues strongly that the more common replacement of *a*- (in “initial-*a*-final”) by *á*- does not reflect any genuine linguistic change and that after the mid 9th century the initial signs *a*- and *á*- are functionally equivalent. Late usage in areas not yet discussed corroborates these conclusions. In texts from Amuq of uncertain date from the 9th to 8th century we find competing spellings: *á-mi-za* (KIRÇOĞLU §4), *á-pa-ti* and *á-sà-tu* (TULEIL 2 §d) vs. *a-mi-sa*, *a-mi-i*, and *a-mi-zi* (JISR EL HADID frag. 1 l. 2 and frag. 2 l.2), and in the single text TELL TAYINAT 2 *á-mu* and *á-pi*- (see n. 15) vs. once *a-mi* (TELL TAYINAT frag. 5a-b, l. 1).

We may also in light of the above make reasonable sense of the usage of the Assur letters, which has been viewed as chaotic.²⁰ The Assur letters show a mixed system, but genuine variation is extremely limited. The first-person forms are spelled consistently *á-mi*- and *á-mu*. With equal consistency ‘to be’ is spelled *a-sa*-. Such regularity cannot be regarded as reflecting error, but the evidence presented above shows that it cannot represent any real linguistic contrast. Once again in the late period spellings with initial *a*- and *á*- are equivalent. Since the writer of the Assur letters clearly was familiar with both usages, we are not surprised to find some variation: /aba-/ is spelled three times as *a-pa*- (*a-pa-zi* in ASSUR b §8 and f+g §21 and *a-pa(-ha)* ‘then’ or ‘that (way)’ in a §6) and once as *á-pa-ⁱ-ya* (ASSUR f+g §38). It is noteworthy that we also find such variation in a word that before the mid 9th century was spelled with *á*-, not with “initial-*a*-final”: three times *a-zu-za* and twice *a-zu-sa* ‘we, us’ vs. twice *á-zu-ⁱ-za* (cf. *á-zi-ya-ti* /antsiyadi/ ‘with our’ in IZGIN 1 §16).

The late texts just described show some spelling of initial /a-/ in words that previously had “initial-*a*-final” with the *a*-sign in its normal position, in competition with the more dominant innovative use of the *á*-sign. Another set of texts shows a different competition. The earliest of these is MARAŞ 4 (dated by Hawkins 2000:256 to the mid 9th century). This text follows the late pattern for sequences with initial conjunction /a-/: *a-wa/i* but *wa/i-mi-i*, *wa/i-*

¹⁸ In view of other alternate spellings with initial *a*- and *á*- in texts after the mid 9th century, including in KARATEPE, these examples cannot be dismissed as errors, *pace* Kloekhorst 2004:29⁷.

¹⁹ Against Hawkins 2000:53 and Kloekhorst 2004:29⁷. There are *no* examples in KARATEPE in either version of non-spelling of initial /a-/ in *any* word previously spelled with “initial-*a*-final” (aside, of course, from clause-initial sequences with /a-/, which follow a totally different convention).

²⁰ E.g., Kloekhorst (2004:33) quite unjustifiably dismisses the practices of the Assur letters as erroneous and of no probative value. This is patently untrue. In the spelling of initial sequences of /a-/ + /-wa-/ with and without further clitics the Assur letters follow without exception the standard practice of texts after the mid 9th century.

tá, etc. (as noted above, it also once employs *a-wa/i-tá* with full spelling). For other “initial-*a*-final” words it shows alternation between the use of initial *á*- and *no spelling* of the *a*-vowel! We thus find *á-mi-na* in §15 but *mi-i* in §17 for ‘my’ and *á-pa-ara/i* ‘thus’ (/abari/) in §15 vs. *pa-ti-i* ‘in that’ in §3.

The possessives *á-mi-na* and *mi-i* both precede their head noun and co-occur with the reflexive pronoun *-mi* in entirely parallel clauses. There is thus no basis whatsoever for supposing a true linguistic contrast between a fully accented /amin/ and a weakly accented /mi/ with aphaeresis. Likewise, since *pa-ti-i* (“ANNUS”) *u-si* ‘in that year’ resumes a preposed relative clause, it also must be fully accented. Given the alternation of spellings with and without initial *á*- for the very same word, we must also suppose that *sa-ta* in §8 likewise spells expected /asanta/ (Pret3Pl) and that the absence of alternate *á-sa-* is accidental.²¹

If MARAŞ 4 were the only text to show the pattern just described, we might attribute the alternation observed to the text being “transitional” from the use of “initial-*a*-final” to the later standard use of the initial *á*-sign. Note, however, that the text is not truly transitional: there are no examples of the older practice of “initial-*a*-final”. Furthermore, some other later texts also show the pattern of alternate spellings with an initial *á*-sign and with no spelling of /a-/ at all. One coherent set consists of texts from Commagene, of the “House of Suppiluliumas” datable to the period from the end of the 9th century through the first quarter of the 8th (see Hawkins 2000:333). BOYBEYPINARI 2 writes *á-mi-sá* in §5 vs. *mi-i-sa* in §2, *mi-sá* in §7 and *mi-i-sá* in §19; BOYBEYPINARI 2 §20 writes *á-pa-ti-pa-wa/i* vs. *pa-ti-pa-wa/i* in BOYBEYPINARI 1 §10; likewise *á-pa-sa* and *á-pa-si-i-na* in BOYBEYPINARI 2 §13 and §20 vs. *pa-sa-na* in BOYBEYPINARI 1 §3. Similarly, MALPINAR contrasts *mu-u* ‘I’ in §1 with *á-mi-i* in §2 and *á-mi* in §5. Once again, there can be no question of *mu-u* representing a weakly accented and aphaeresized form of /amu/: use of the first-person subject pronoun in an opening clause is precisely for emphasis. Nor is *á-mi-sá tá-ti-sa* ‘my father’ credibly more emphatic than *mi-i-sa DOMINUS-ni-sa* ‘my lord’. We happen to have attested in the Commagene texts only forms of ‘to be’ with initial *á*-sign: *á-sa-ta* (/asta/ Pret3Sg) in ANCOZ 4 §1, *á-sa-ta* (/asanta/ Pret3Pl) in ANCOZ 8 §6, and *á-sa-tu-u* (/asantu/ Imv3Pl) in ANCOZ 7 §14. There can be little doubt, however, that spellings in *sa-* existed.

The undeniable alternation of spellings with and without initial *á*- in the same word in the texts just described means that we should interpret likewise the variations found in a few late texts from other regions whose brevity (or fragmentary state) and uncertain dating would otherwise leave room for doubt. Thus e.g. when we find in KARKAMIŞ A18e §6 *pa-ti-pa á-mi-sa*, we should not strain to explain in linguistic terms why the one word “lacks” initial /a-/ while the other does not. We are dealing with purely orthographic variation for what are /aba-/ and /ami-/. Likewise, *á-mi-sa* beside *mi-i-sa* in MARAŞ 14 §2 and §5 justifies not only our reading *sa-tu* *ibid.* §7 as /astu/, but also our attributing no more significance to *pa-ti-*

²¹ As per Hawkins (2000:257-258), the forms *sá-ta* in §9 and *sá-a-ha* in §10 belong not to ‘to be’ but to a separate transitive verb /sa-/, though I now have growing doubts that it can be identified with (*69)*sa-* ‘release, let go’.

i-[]-*wa/i* in MARAŞ 11 §3 than to *á-mu* in MARAŞ 3 §3 and §9. That is, the former should be read /abati/ just as the latter is read /amu/.

The only reasonable conclusion to be drawn from the facts just cited is that some later scribes chose *at times* to apply the convention used universally for sequences of initial /a-/ + /-wa-/ plus further clitics to the other words that had previously been spelled with “initial-*a*-final”: that is, they chose not to indicate the initial /a-/ at all. Alternate spellings in both instances show that the initial /a-/ was still spoken, as all available linguistic evidence would suggest.²² The one clear finding of the present investigation is: there is no probative evidence for aphaeresis of initial /a-/ at any period of HLUwian, and the notion should be abandoned once and for all.

The discovery of “initial-*a*-final” and the preceding full survey of the orthographic practices that replaced it from the mid 9th century onward are ruinous for the claim of Kloekhorst (2004) that initial *a*- in HLUwian spells [a-] while *á* spells [ʔ(a)].²³ First of all, it is not true that the words for ‘I, me’, ‘my’, ‘that; he, she, it’ and ‘to be’ are spelled overwhelmingly with *á* (Kloekhorst 2004:29). They are in fact spelled consistently with *a*- in all regions through the early 9th century. Nor can the post mid-9th-century spellings with *a*- in these words be dismissed as “aberrant” (Kloekhorst 2004:31-33).²⁴

Nevertheless, it is true that the predominant spelling of all these words in late texts is with *á*-. That is, from the mid 9th century onward the normal spelling for all words with initial /a-/ is with *á*-, aside from the clause-initial conjunction /a-/ and /anda/ ‘in(to)’ and derivatives. The upshot of this fact is that we cannot be sure whether words that are thus far attested only from the mid 9th century onward with *á*- were in fact spelled this way in the early period or were spelled with “initial-*a*-final”. One might venture that in the case of words of frequent occurrence the absence in late texts of any variants either with initial *a*- or with no

²² In the case of ‘to be’ no one has ever presented one iota of credible evidence for enclisis of the verb, because none exists (the desperation of my own speculation in Melchert 1994:276 is transparent). The word order of HLUwian ‘to be’ matches that of Hittite and CLuwian (typically clause-final), where plene spellings of the initial vowel confirm that the verb was fully accented, as expected. In the case of HLUwian /ami-/ ‘my’ accent on the *first* syllable is indicated by the syncope seen in forms like the abl.-inst. *á-mi-ti* (e.g. BULGARMADEN §6, KÖRKÜN §30), *á-mi-ti* and *á-mi+ra/i* (KARATEPE §XVIII, Ho) and the dat.-loc. pl. *á-mi-za* (KARATEPE §XXXII, Hu) and *á-mi-za* (KARATEPE §XXX, Ho).

²³ To his considerable credit, Kloekhorst himself notices (2004:47⁵⁴) the suspicious correlation between “aphaeresis” and the appearance of the sign *a* at the end of the word and calls for further study of “aphaeresis”.

²⁴ Kloekhorst’s “synchronic” evidence for *á* representing [ʔ] is also problematic, namely the spelling *pa-á-li-ma-li* for Ba’al(i)-malik. First, as he indicates, this spelling occurs only on Empire-period seals, never in HLUwian texts, so it is by no means certain that it is diagnostic for HLUwian. Second and more seriously, spellings on the Nişantepe seals such as *Mu-wa/i-á* beside *Mu-wa/i* for /Mu:wa/ suggest that on the Empire personal seals *á* was in fact used as a “plene” vowel sign just like *a* (see Hawkins *apud* Herbordt 2005:291-292). In any case, even if significant, the spelling *pa-á-li-ma-li* may represent mere hiatus.

spelling of /a-/ would argue for earlier spelling with *á*-. However, the rather restricted number of texts that employ the alternate spellings and the likewise very limited number of HLUwian words with initial /a-/ other than those already discussed that may be reasonably termed “of frequent occurrence” make this a hazardous supposition.

Therefore any claims that spellings with initial *a*- and *á*- reflect a synchronic (and/or diachronic) linguistic contrast must be based on the spellings of texts from the Empire through the early 9th century. Words in those texts spelled consistently with the sign *á*- are:²⁵ /a(ya)-/ ‘to do, make’ (*á* in EMİRGAZİ altars §§25,27); /ak-/ ‘throw, hurl’ (INFRA *áka* ‘to subject’ in SÜDBURG *passim*); /ama-/ ‘my’ (*á-ma-za* [/amantsa/, nom.-acc. sg. neut.] in KARKAMIŠ A14a §§3,8 and 6x elsewhere in early Karkamiš texts, 4x in Tell Ahmar texts, and in MARAŞ 8 §12; *á-ma* [/ama/, nom.-acc. pl. neut.] in KARKAMIŠ A11a §§8,13 and A11b+c §5),²⁶ /asa-/ ‘to sit; seat’ (as (SOLUM.MI)*á-sa* ‘seat’ [dat.-loc. sg.] in KARAHÖYÜK §4 and (SOLIUM)*á-sa-ta* ‘sat’ [Pret3Pl] in KARKAMIŠ A11b+c §10); /assatsa-/ ‘to say’ (*á-sa₅-za-ta* [Pret3Sg] in TELL AHMAR 5 §11 and TELL AHMAR 6 §22); /asharmis(a)-/ ‘blood sacrifice’ (as (“*350”) *á-sa-ha+ra/i-mi-sà* in KARKAMIŠ A11b+c §18a and A12 §11); /alaman-/ ‘name’ (*á-ta/i₅-ma-za* (IZGIN 2 §8, MARAŞ 8 §12, KARKAMIŠ A14a §8 and 5x more at Karkamiš, and 6x in Tell Ahmar); /atsa-/ ‘to love’ (*á-zi/a-ta* [Pret3Pl] in YALBURT 4,§3, (LITUUS)*á-za-tá* [Pret3Pl] in KARKAMIŠ A11a §7 and A11b+c §9, *á-za-mi* in FRAKTİN, (LITUUS)*á-za-mi-(i)-sa* KARKAMIŠ A11b+c §1 and twice more in Karkamiš, also as a personal name in IZGIN 1 and 2); /antsiya-/ ‘our’ (*á-zi-ya-ti* IZGIN 1 §16). Also noteworthy and problematic are /andan/ (in *á-ta-na tar-za-mi*- ‘(favorably) turned toward’ TELL AHMAR 2 §2 and TELL AHMAR 6 §2 vs. *a-tá* ‘in(to)’ *ibid.*)²⁷ and the personal name *á-sa-tú-wa/i-ta/i_{4/5}-ma-za-*, *á-sa-tú-wa/i-la-ma-za-* (KARKAMIŠ A11a §1, KARKAMIŠ A11b+c §1, KARKAMIŠ A27u), appearing also as *á-sa-tu-wa/i+ra/i-ma-za-* (MARAŞ 8 §1).

For the list of words spelled with initial *a*- or “initial-*a*-final” see above (for the sake of brevity I henceforth refer merely to “words spelled with initial *a*-). Is any plausible linguistic pattern discernible in the data? The most immediately suggestive fact is the contrast between *á-ma*- and *a-mi-/a-mu*, where *á*- appears before a synchronically low vowel in the next syllable and *a*- before a following high vowel. This difference points to a contrast in quality, specifically in height, between the vowels spelled by initial *á*- and *a*-, the former being lower

²⁵ I naturally ignore here most personal and place names, since their linguistic source and phonology are usually unknowable. I make exceptions only for those whose connection with known appellatives is transparent.

²⁶ In consistent contrast with /ami-/ spelled *a-mi*- or **a-mi*-, a fact first pointed out to me by Elisabeth Rieken (pers. comm.).

²⁷ Despite the problem presented by the contrasting spelling vs. /anda/ I follow here the persuasive interpretation of *á-da-na tar-za-mi*- of Rieken (2004:459-460), who compares Hittite *anda neyant*-.

than the latter.²⁸ Since at least in *á-ma-* and *a-mi-* ‘my’ the two forms surely continue the same prehistoric vowel, the putative synchronic contrast also presupposes a regressive assimilation in one or the other.

Possible further support for the tentative analysis just suggested may come from the idiosyncratic usage of the 12th-century KARAHÖYÜK text. While all other texts up to the early 9th century consistently spell ‘to be’ with *a-*, in KARAHÖYÜK we find *a-sa-ti* /asti/ (§§20-21) and *a-sa-tu* /astu/ (§24) vs. *á-sa-ha* /asha/ (§10), i.e. with the same apparent contrast as in *a-mi-/a-mu* vs. *á-ma-*.²⁹ We may also attribute the peculiar spelling *á-tá* for ‘in(to)’ /anda/ in KARAHÖYÜK §11 to the same phenomenon.³⁰

Can we find any further support for the notion of a contrast between a higher vowel represented by initial *a-* (for the sake of argument perhaps a mid-vowel [ə]) vs. a lower one spelled with *á-* ([a] or [ɑ])? The answer appears to be a qualified yes, but the usable evidence is sparse, and some serious problems must be openly confronted. The stems for /amu/ ‘I, me’ and /ama/i- ‘my’ almost certainly reflect prehistoric **e* (thus with Rasmussen 2007:163 against Kloekhorst 2004:39). Likewise, of course, the strong forms of /as-/ ‘to be’ < **h₁es-*. Since CLuwian *ādduwa-* ‘evil’ shows the effects of “Čop’s Law” (see Čop 1970), it and HLuwian /addwa-/ must continue **h₁édwo-* (Melchert 1994:238). HLuwian /aduna/i- ‘enemy’ is derived from a related stem **h₁édun-o-* (see Schindler 1975:56 on Grk. ὀδύνη ‘pain’, Watkins 1982:261 on the connection of the latter to ‘bad, evil’, and especially Rasmussen 1999:147-148⁶ for its morphology and comparison with Tocharian B *yolo* ‘bad’).

The adverb /apan/ ‘behind; afterward’ < **óp-VN* and adjective /apara/i- ‘later’ < **opero-* and cognates in Hittite and CLuwian are based on a PIE adverb **op-* (with Morpurgo Davies 1983 against Dunkel 1982/83). The far-deictic demonstrative and accented third-person pronoun /aba-/ is cognate with Hittite *apā-/apē-* and must represent a virtual **obhó/é-*. Since it has direct cognates in Palaic, CLuwian, and Hittite *a-* and further in Lydian *ak-*, the HLuwian clause-initial conjunction must continue a form of the anaphoric/deictic stem **o-*.³¹

All words spelled with initial *a-* may thus reasonably be derived from performs with a mid vowel **e* or **o*. For words spelled with *á-*, however, the picture is not nearly so clear. We must first set aside /assatsa-/ ‘to say’. This verb must be derived from the Luwian word for ‘mouth’ (CLuwian *āšš-*), but there are few words whose prehistory is more complicated and controversial than that of the Anatolian word for ‘mouth’, so no arguments can be made based

²⁸ Rasmussen (2007) already correctly suggests that the difference between *á-* and *a-* is one of timbre, but his attempt to define *á-* as synchronic /e/ faces insuperable difficulties.

²⁹ Given the overall facts of early spelling of initial *a-*, I now take the verb *sa-tá* of KARAHÖYÜK §12 as the transitive verb *sa-* (against Hawkins 2000:290): ‘The revered Storm-god of the land POCULUM ___-ed me in every place.’

³⁰ Probably thus with Hawkins (2000:293) despite the well-founded doubts of Kloekhorst (2004:31).

³¹ Whether the conjunction represents the bare stem **o-* or a case form such as an instrumental **oh₁* (see Rieken 1999:86 on Hittite *ta* < **toh₁*) is immaterial for our present purposes. I reject categorically the claim of Kloekhorst (2004:42) that HLuwian *a-wa/i* is not to be analyzed as /a=wa/ with the quotative particle.

on this item. HLuwian /a(ya-)/ ‘to do, make’ reflects **Hyeh₁-* (Melchert 1984:14-15, 159-161 *et al.*), and by the very attractive analysis of Rieken (2007) HLuwian /ak-/ ‘to throw, hurl’ in INFRA *á-ka-* ‘to subject’ likewise is from **Hyeh₁k-*. The Lycian cognate *a(i)-* of the former suggests a low vowel reflex of the sequence **eh₁*.

The adjective /antsiya-/ ‘our’ of the first person plural pronoun clearly shows a reflex of syllabic **ǵ*. A zero-grade base **ǵs-* is also possible for ‘to love’ (read /antsa-/; for the root etymology see Rasmussen 2007:164). HLuwian *á-ta/i₅-ma-(za)* is also most reasonably taken as /alaman=tsa/, with leveling of an ablauting prehistoric paradigm **laman/*anman- < *h₁néh₃mǵ/*h₁ǵh₃mn-*. The *á-* would thus here also reflect **ǵ*.³² I know of nothing to preclude the assumption that the *a* of *an < *ǵ* was a low vowel.

Complications for our tentative hypothesis arise with /asharmis(a)-/ ‘blood sacrifice’, which clearly is based on **h₁ésh₂r* with **e*, and with /asa-/ ‘to sit; seat’. By the popular derivation of Hittite and Luwian ‘to sit (down)’ < **h₁éh₁so-* HLuwian /asa-/ could be classed under the examples of *á- < *éh₁*, but I follow Oettinger (2004:490-491, with references to the prior analysis) in supposing instead a preform **h₁éso-*.³³ Given the evidence of *á-ma-* vs. *a-mu-/a-mi-* (and the apparent supporting parallel of *á-sa-ha* vs. *a-sa-ti/tu* in KARAHÖYÜK), we may salvage our hypothesis thus far by assuming that the regular outcome of initial **e-* and **o-* in HLuwian was a mid vowel represented by *a-*, but that **e-* was assimilated to a low vowel spelled with *á-* when followed consistently by a low vowel in the next syllable. Both ‘blood’ and ‘sit; seat’ meet this condition, while in other instances of **e-* the presence of an *i* or *u* in at least some forms of the paradigm would have blocked the effect (it is reasonable to assume that the adjective /addwa-/ ‘bad, evil’ had “*i*-mutation” and thus some forms of the shape /addwi-/).

Notice, however, that there is a very serious contradiction in the status of **o* in the account just presented. For purposes of the putative lowering rule the reflex of **o* must be counted as a low vowel: in neuter nom.-acc. singular *á-ma-za < *émom+*, in *á-sa-* ‘sit’ < **h₁éso-* and putatively in KARAHÖYÜK *á-tá* ‘in(to)’ < **éndo*. However, initial **o-* appears to be spelled with *a-* pointing to a non-low vowel.

This difficulty is not insurmountable. First of all, there is independent evidence from “Čop’s Law” that pre-Luwian **e* and **o* remained distinct vowels: contrast **pérVN > CLuwian parran* ‘in front, before’ with **dóru- > CLuwian tāru-* ‘wood’. Second, in the case

³²Space does not permit a full discussion of the complex issues surrounding ‘name’. Cf. Kloekhorst (2004:40²⁷) and Rieken and Yakubovich in this volume. Suffice it to say that I assume that the result of the dissimilation of **n* before two following nasals in this word was a voiced continuant that was identified with /l/ in word-initial position (and spelled with the *la*-sign) and that interchanged with both /l/ and /r/ word-internally. Contrary to my previous claims (e.g. Melchert 1994:83), I no longer see any justification for assuming that **n* first dissimilated to a voiced stop [d].

³³ As per Oettinger, HLuwian /is(a)nu-/ ‘to seat’ and /istarta-/ ‘throne’ with *i*-vocalism can only be derived from a lengthened-grade **h₁ēs-*. The derivation from **h₁éh₁s-* by Kloekhorst (2004:40-41) is quite impossible. See Melchert 1994:245 with references.

of *appara/i-* < **opero-* and some forms of the paradigm of **obhó/é-* the initial **o* was certainly followed by a mid vowel **e*. By the derivation of the quotative particle < **wer(h₁)* (Oettinger 1979:344 *et al.*) the conjunction **ó-* would have regularly stood before **we*, and this is also possible by the alternate derivation < **-we/o* (Joseph 1981:96 after Przyluski). The vocalism of the second syllable of */apan/* is indeterminate. One *could* therefore suppose that **e* led regularly to a Luwian mid vowel (such as [ə]), while **o* was regularly lowered to [a]. However, not only was **e* lowered before a following low vowel (including [a] < **o*), but also **o* failed to lower when it was followed by the mid vowel resulting from **e*. While the available facts appear to permit this account, its fragility is transparent.

Two complications require special explanation even with this revised scenario. First, if the personal name */Astu(w)alamantsa/* is (as it appears) a “Wunschname” meaning ‘let there be a name’ (i.e. ‘let him (the child) have renown’), then we require an explanation for why it is spelled consistently with *á-* in early texts where the verb ‘to be’ is spelled with equal consistency with *a-*. One can, of course, as always devise an ad hoc solution: perhaps instead of glide insertion there was instead desyllabification so that the name was */Astwalamantsa/*. In that case the supposed mid vowel from **e* would have stood before the putatively low vowel resulting from a syllabic nasal and thus undergone lowering. I spare readers further speculative alternatives.

Finally, most problematic is the spelling *a-tá* for */anda/* vs. *á-ta-na* for */andan/*. These words have been reconstructed either with full grade as **(h₁)endo(m)* or with zero-grade as **(h₁)pdo(m)*: see Melchert 1994:245 vs. Kloekhorst 2004:42-43 and compare also Schrijver 1991:58-59. According to our tentative conclusions regarding the outcome of a syllabic nasal reached above, a zero-grade preform should give *á-*, but note further that by the putative lowering rule so should a sequence **endo*! I see no immediate solution to this problem.³⁴

Current available evidence is thus no better than suggestive of a qualitative contrast between *á-* and *a-*. We sorely need to know just what the early spelling was for words whose prehistoric vocalism is reasonably assured, such as ‘to eat’ (*/ad~ats-/* < **h₁ed-*), ‘horse’ (*/atsu-/* < **(h₁)e^hwo-*), ‘back, again’ (*/api/* < **ópi*), and ‘to come’ (*/awi-/* < **auh₁ei-*), all of which are spelled consistently with *á-* from the mid 9th century. Pending the discovery of new texts from the period before the mid 9th century that enlarge our data base for words with initial */a-/*, I can only declare the status of *a-* versus *á-* spellings a *non liquet*.

I must in closing briefly discuss one last issue regarding the spelling of initial */a-/*. Alert readers will have noticed that I have not mentioned any words beginning with */ar-/*. One reason for this is that we have only a single instance of an appellative in */ar-/* attested in texts before the mid 9th century: *a+ra/i-* [], an incomplete form of */ar-/* ‘to arrive’ in YALBURT 3,§2. We thus have no basis for determining whether other words with initial */ar-/* were spelled with *á-* in the early period.

³⁴ It is true that the PIE morpheme **do* ‘in the direction of’ had an allomorph **de* (e.g. in Grk. οἴκα-δε ‘homeward’), but I am unwilling to invoke it merely to save what is by any measure a speculative hypothesis.

There is, however, a more fundamental issue regarding the spelling of initial /ar-/. As correctly emphasized by Kloekhorst (2004:32), in the entire corpus that *is* available to us there is a virtually complete absence of any use of the oblique stroke that marks the presence of /r/ with the sign á (the single instance in EĞREK §3 is uncertain). One finds only *a+ra/i-* and the separate sign *ara/i-* in initial position. MARAŞ 2 §3 does show *á-ra+a* (i.e. *á-a+ra/i*) for /ara/ ‘made’, and presumably *á-ri+i* would have also been possible, but this option apparently was not exploited, leaving the status of the hapax *á-ra+a* quite unclear.

One must in any case agree with Kloekhorst (2004:32) that it is not credible that the spelling *a+ra/i-tu* /arantu/ ‘let them eat’ in KULULU 5 §11 reflects a linguistically real variation in vocalism vs. *á-tà-tu-u* in SULTANHAN §33a and the other regular post mid-9th-century spellings with *á-ta-*. That rhotacism did not cause any such change is shown by the infinitive ‘to eat’ spelled *á-ru-na* (ÇİFTLİK §16 etc.). It is likewise hard to believe that there is any linguistic contrast between *a-ru-ti-* ‘basket’ (ASSUR letters c §9 and f+g §41) and the verb *á-ru-wa/i+ra/i-tu* (ŞIRZI §3), both with an initial sequence /aru-/.

That /r/ can cause neutralization of height contrast in preceding vowels is well established (cf. the merger of the vowels of ‘Mary’, ‘merry’, and ‘marry’ in American English dialects). The apparent equivalence of spellings with *a-* and *á-* in the case of initial /ar-/ could thus reflect a genuine conditioned merger of the putatively distinct mid and low vowels tentatively posited above. Obviously, however, the apparent lack of any functional difference in *a-* and *á-* in the presence of /r/ could just as well be taken as evidence against there being such a difference anywhere.

In sum, the present investigation has shown that with recognition of “initial-*a*-final” and the various orthographic practices that replaced it, there is no credible evidence for aphaeresis in HLuwian at any period. Nor is the overall usage of *a-* and *á-* in HLuwian texts at all compatible with the claim that the latter represents an initial glottal stop. Whether the largely complementary use of initial *a-* (including “initial-*a*-final”) and *á-* in early texts reflects a genuine difference in vowel quality remains uncertain.

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