

MÍR CURAD

STUDIES IN HONOR OF
CALVERT WATKINS

Edited by
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SONDERDRUCK

Innsbruck 1998

INNSBRÜCKER BEITRÄGE ZUR SPRACHWISSENSCHAFT

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Poetic Meter and Phrasal Stress in Hittite

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Der metrische Sandhi ist keine willkürliche poetische Lizenz. Er beruht auf einer Verallgemeinerung der Sandhieregeln der Umgangssprache, ist also nicht mit den letzteren identisch. (Kurylowicz 1975:5)

Calvert Watkins has always emphasized in his teaching and writings the above principle that poetic language is not a matter of untrammelled invention, but rather the exploitation for artistic purposes of features present in natural language. We should accordingly be able to find a basis for putative features of a given poetic tradition in the usage of the corresponding ordinary language. I offer as a further illustration the role of phrasal stress in Hittite poetic meter.

McNeil (1963) concluded on the basis of substitution patterns in recurring formulae that the meter of the Hurro-Hittite epics of the Kumarbi Cycle was not syllable-counting, but stress-based, consisting of lines with four stresses divided into two equal cola. Building on McNeil's work, Durnford (1971) inferred certain facts about syntactic stress in Hittite. Recent studies of poetic meter in Anatolian have given these works scant attention (Eichner 1993:100¹³) or none at all (Watkins 1995:247f).

This treatment undoubtedly reflects in part the premise that, as translation literature, the Hurro-Hittite epics are likely to be derivative in their stylistics and an unreliable source of information on native Hittite poetic practice. Data from the Hurro-Hittite Bilingual (see Neu 1996) now casts serious doubt on this assumption. Stylistic features of the Hittite epic also found in the new text have no model in the Hurrian original.

To cite one well-known example, it is common in the epic for a subject or direct object to be doubled by a coreferential clitic pronoun: *n=aš šarā tiyat 'Kumarbiš* 'And he arose, did Kumarbi' (KUB 33.102 ii 17 with dupl.); *peššiyandu=ya=an aliyanan* ^{LUMES} *šAIDUTIM* 'Let the hunters indeed cast him (down), the deer' (KBo 32.14 ii 13-14). This clitic-doubling has no model in the Hurrian, but is rather the extension for stylistic effect of an attested, but relatively rare usage of Hittite prose: see Garrett (1990:252ff & 264f), with references to prior works.¹ The same is true of other features such as the

¹ Contra Neu (1996:114&157) there is no basis for supposing that the clitic-doubling is a device to mark the "transitive character" of the Hurrian verb. First, many Hurrian transitives show no such feature in the Hittite translation. Second, clitic doubling also occurs with intransitives. Third, as Garrett shows, the usage is found in Hittite prose where there is no reason to suppose a translation: *š=an attas=miš* ^m *Kizzuwan nat<ta> huenūt* 'And my father did not let him, Kizzuwa, run' (KBo 3.28 ii 19).

frequent use of the construction with “supine” + *dāi-/tiya-* (e.g. *memiškewan dais* ‘began to speak’). In sum, the Hittites had their own sense of elevated, literary style, and we may reasonably assume that the stress-based meter discovered by McNeil and Durnford also reflects native tradition. If this is true, however, then there should be a basis for it in ordinary Hittite language. It is this proposition which I intend to test here.

Durnford (1971:70f, 74) claims that certain words which we would normally expect to carry stress may count as stressless for metrical purposes: e.g., an adnominal genitive.² The question is: can we find any evidence for such a phenomenon in Hittite prose? Although there predictably is no direct marking of prosodic features in Hittite written texts, one famous feature of the language can potentially furnish us relevant information. By so-called “Wackernagel’s Law”, unstressed anaphoric pronouns and various sentential particles appear as enclitics to the first accented word in a clause. The definition of “first accented word” is complicated by the status of certain sentence-initial conjunctions (see Hale 1987:46ff, and Garrett 1990:33f), but in general the sentential clitics are preceded in Hittite by only a single full lexical word, as we would expect. If Durnford is right, however, that in certain syntagms (such as noun (gen.) + noun) one ordinarily stressed word undergoes stress reduction, then we might expect to find occasional traces of this process. That is, we should be able to find such syntagms preceding the Wackernagel clitics.

Before proceeding, I must deal with some potential hazards for such an investigation. As is now widely known, the “local” particles *-kan* and *-šan* do sometimes occur clause-internally (see Neu 1995:145ff). However, in all but a handful of dubious cases, these clause-internal examples are enclitic to nouns in the dative-locative. All other instances of sequences preceding *-kan* or *-šan* thus may be counted as secure clause-initial cases.

Other problems are graphic in nature. We must exclude certain examples where an entire syntagm is written logographically. Some elements which are surely phrases in Hittite are treated as compounds (at least written as a single word) when represented by logograms: e.g. *šunāš parn-* ‘god/s/gods’ house’ = É.DINGER_{LM} ‘temple’. Since the latter is an indivisible unit, placement of sentential clitics after it is of no significance for the status of the Hittite phrase. The scribes also with some frequency represent a head noun and adnominal genitive by juxtaposing them in that order. This practice is especially common with set phrases, but is not limited to them: e.g. LUGAL KUR_{URU} HATTI ‘king of the land of Hatti’. Although the constituents are written with spacing, they are never allowed to be separated by other elements, including clitics. This is unsurprising, since it is the very juxtaposition that assures the genitival reading.

² As per Durnford (1971:70, note 12), we speak of “unstressed” for metrical purposes, but the process in actual speech was likely a reduction, not total loss of stress.

On the other hand, there is plentiful evidence that nouns in the genitive may be graphically separated from their head nouns when the Akkadian preposition *ša* is employed: *ša ABI=šU=yā=wa=za išhiul IDI* ‘I also recognized the treaty of his father’ (KUB 19.29 iv 9). Likewise, there can also be separation when the genitive is written phonetically, but the head noun logographically: *linkiyaš=war=aš DINGIR.MEŠ* [] ‘The gods of the oath [] them’ (KBo 4.4 ii 11). When we encounter similar syntagms written wholly before the sentential clitics, we may tentatively conclude that this writing is not conditioned by a purely graphic convention. Aside from sequences written entirely phonetically (which are rare), the general principle to be followed is this: in order for an expression written before the sentential clitics to count as evidence for a phrase with a single stress, we must also find examples of the same type of phrase with the elements written separately before and after the clitic sequence. Only the latter give assurance that we are dealing with phrases with independent constituents each of which may potentially be stressed in the first place.

We may now turn to specific cases. Durnford (1971:74) summarizes his preliminary results based on the epic meter as follows: (1) all verbs, finite and non-finite, are stressed; (2) nouns are normally stressed, except dependent genitives and certain special cases (more below); (3) predicate adjectives are stressed, but attributive ones are not; (4) sentence-initial conjunctions and attached clitics are unstressed; (5) local adverbs/postpositions are unstressed, and probably also *mān* ‘like’; (6) the conjunction *mān* ‘when, if’ is stressed.

These conclusions require some revision. First, we must make the same distinction for local adverbs that Durnford makes for nouns and adjectives. While the former may be unstressed as postpositions with nouns and as preverbs immediately before the verb, evidence from both the epic and ordinary language shows that they certainly are stressed when occurring independently. The example which Durnford (1971:74) finds problematic (*nu=šši=kan išhahru parā* // PA₃.HL.A-uš *mān aršauzi* ‘His tears flow(ed) forth like streams’) becomes regular if we assume properly that the preverb *parā* in tmesis is stressed. Confirmation for this comes from the frequent appearance of preverbs clause-initially before sentential clitics: *arha=war=at=za šarrandat* ‘And they divided themselves’ (KUB 14.15+ iii 30).

Second and more seriously, Durnford makes no allowance for true optionality: the possibility that certain word classes or syntactic units may count as stressed or unstressed as the poet chooses. Such rigidity is unlikely typologically and directly contradicted by the evidence of Hittite prose. The examples cited above show already that dependent genitives may count as stressed, and in fact this is overwhelmingly the normal situation in prose (for clause-initial cases, the only ones which we can control). If, as I will show below, we do occasionally find evidence for noun (gen.) + noun as one stressed unit, it is unlikely that Hittite meter required this reading. It is far more

plausible that poetic language took advantage of this possibility to give the flexibility of counting such a noun phrase as one or two stresses.

I in fact contend that this principle extends to all word classes which may be stressed in prose. Durnford claims that attributive adjectives are unstressed, but in prose they may occur in stressed position (*pargamuš=kan* HURSAG.MEŠ-uš *šanḫun* 'I searched the high mountains', KUB 33.24 i 27), and evidence from the epic also requires this possibility: *nu* HUL-un UD.KAM-an // LÚ.HUL-an *šallanuškezzi* 'He raises a bad day as (an) evil (one)' (KUB 33.96 i 6).³ The status of preverbs immediately before a verb is more complicated, but note that the example of clause-initial *arḫa* cited above is separated from the verb only by the sentential clitics, not by any stressed element. This suggests that preverbs may be stressed in this position, and again some examples in the epic appear to demand such: *nu=war=aš=kan nepiši* LUGAL-eznanni // UGU *paiddu* *nu=wa=kan* *Kummiyan* URU-an *šanezzin* // GAM *tamašdu* 'Let him go up to heaven to kingship. Let him press down the fine city Kummiya!' (KUB 33.93 iii 19'-20'). The first line has three assuredly stressed elements, and only the preverb *šarā* 'up' can supply the needed fourth. In the second line one could count the attributive adjective *šanezzin* as stressed (see above), but this would place the caesura between noun and attributive adjective, an unlikely possibility.

The conjunction *mān* 'if, whenever; when' calls for special comment. Durnford counts it as stressed, based on the following example: *mān* É.A-aš // *uddār ištamašta* 'When Ea heard the words' (KUB 33.106 iii 45'). However, we also find at least once *mahḫan*: *nu mahḫan* DINGIR.MEŠ // *memiyan išt[amašser]* (KUB 33.106 i 2'). Elsewhere we find the ambiguous spelling GIM-an. All other occurrences are restored. Durnford follows Güterbock (1952:15 & passim) in reading and restoring *mān* in all cases. Available evidence makes an equally good argument for *mahḫan*.

On the other hand, the following example suggests that *mān* must count as unstressed: *mān* *Kumarbiš* INIM.MEŠ-ar // *memiyanuwanz* [i zi]nn[li] 'When Kumarbi finished saying the words' (KUB 33.93 iii 26'). Durnford (1971:71) tries to account for this type with the ad hoc assumption that *uddār* may be unstressed when it is the direct object of a periphrastic verb with infinitive or supine. His arguments do not hold—neither the infinitive nor supine is in any sense a direct object of the finite verb, and there is no syntactic motivation for the direct object to be unstressed here any more than elsewhere. In any case, this argument will not do for the following example (with the highly plausible restoration of Güterbock 1951:146, after the parallel text): *mān=za* *Kumarbiš* h[attatar] // ZI-ni *pe(r)an dāš*] 'When Kumarbi had taken wisdom to/before his

³ Even if one read LÚ.HUL-an as *antulušan ḫuwappan* against Güterbock 1951:147, this would not help, since by Durnford's system, neither attributive adjective would be stressed, and the line would remain a stress short.

mind' (KUB 33.96 i 11). With already four other stressed elements present, *mān* must count as unstressed. Likewise in the previous example.

This is in fact what we would expect. The very use of *mān* as 'when' with the preterite argues that the Hurro-Hittite epics are Old or Middle Hittite compositions (see Güterbock & Hoffner 1983:148). We also know that *mān* did not count as a stressed element at this period. The evidence comes from its interaction with the contrastive conjunction/particle *=ma*. The latter is strictly a Wackernagel particle, but it regularly appears as enclitic to the stressed word in a clause. However, as long recognized, in Old and Middle Hittite *=ma* is never attached to clause-initial *mān* or *takku* 'if', but to the next full word, as in the frequent formula *mān ŪL=ma* '(But) if not...'; see Güterbock & Hoffner 1983:97, following Ungnad. Only in Neo-Hittite does this status of *mān* change (*mān=ma ŪL* etc.).

The evidence of our last two examples for unstressed *mān* is thus what we would expect for an older composition, based on prose usage. The single example for stressed *mān* with which we began may be explained in one of two ways. First, it could reflect the beginnings of the later practice (whose origin and motivation remain to be explained). Second, and more likely in my view, it may be simply a faulty spelling out by a later scribe of a GIM-an (= *mahḫan*) of his archetype, based on the frequent use in the text of *mān* 'when'.

We come finally to the verb. As noted, Durnford assumes that the verb is always stressed, in all its forms. He gives no account of the following: *nu* *Kumarbiš* ANA *Mukisanu* ^{LU}SUKKAL=ŠU *memiškeuwan* [dāš] 'Kumarbi began to speak to Mukisanu, his vizier' (KUB 33.102+ ii 30-31). I see only two solutions. One is to assume that the appositive 'vizier' counts as a single stress unit with Mukisanu. The other is to suppose that the supine plus its finite verb can count as a single stress. In support of the latter one may cite the apparent equivalence of *appa memiškezzi* and *appa memiškeuwan dāš* in: *nu arunaš* *Impaluriya* // EGIR-pa *memiškezzi* (KUB 33.102+ ii 4), where the duplicates KUB 17.7 ii 15 and KUB 33.98+ ii 2 have *memiškeuwan dāš*. Durnford (1971: 69⁴) assumes that the finite verb is an error, since for him the line is a stress short, but for the stressed preverb see above.⁴ Whether independent support can be found in prose for supine plus finite verb as a single stress unit remains to be seen.⁵

⁴ An error is made less likely by two more occurrences of the finite form in the same formula in KUB 36.13 i 18'-19' & 34'-35': *nu=za* *šSTAR-iš* ZI-ni // EGIR-pa *memiškezzi* 'Ištar began to speak (back) to herself' and *nu* *šSTAR-iš* ANA *U* // [EGIR-pa *memiškezzi* 'Ištar began to speak back to the Storm-god'.

⁵ Further examples from the epic apparently requiring this pattern are found in KUB 33.102 ii 1-2 & 33.106 i 25'. That supine and finite verb may both be stressed is not in question. Note: *Kumarbiš* ANA *Impaluri* // *memiškeuwan dāš* (KUB 36.7a+ iii 37').

Once we have acknowledged, contra Durnford, that any element normally stressed in prose may also count as stressed in poetry, our goal becomes to discover whether there is any evidence in ordinary language for phrasal stress: i.e., may certain syntagms consisting of more than one lexically stressed word form a single stress prosodically, as the epic meter seems to demand? Obviously, such a phenomenon implies stress reduction (or loss). I have framed the question in this way because the nature of our evidence does not permit us to determine where the single phrasal stress falls, nor thus which element has undergone the stress reduction/loss.⁶

The only type of phrase written entirely phonetically before sentential clitics with any frequency is that consisting of two preverbs, where the first indicates the starting point or reference frame of the motion marked by the second: [*per/an ar/ha*=*wa*=*mu* *it* 'Go away (from) before me'] (KBo 12.75,4). Likewise *šer katta* 'down from above' (KUB 7.1 ii 21, KBo 14.20 ii 20.21); *katta(-šarā* 'up from below' (KUB 43.23 Vo 17, KBo 21.22 Vo 37, with OH *katta* for *kattan* before *s*: see Melchert 1994:109); EGIR-*an katta* 'down behind' (KUB 27.67 iii 22). Given the general inseparability of such preverb combinations, one may wonder whether they regularly form a single stress unit.⁷ The epic furnishes one more example of sentence-initial double preverb (KUB 36.9+33.104 iv 12'-13', *per/an*=*šarā*=*wa*=*šmaš* [...] *arantari* '[...] stand up before them') and more crucially an example where the combination must count as a single stress: [*nu*=*ka/n*? ⁴*Ullikummin* ^{NA-ŠU}U-*zin* // ^{GIR}MEŠ ^{GAM-an}*ar/ha ardu/meni*]. 'As for Ullikummin the basalt rock, we shall cut away from under (his) feet' (KUB 33.106 iii 54'). Indeed, the double preverb must form a single stress with the following finite verb.⁸

We find more limited evidence for semi-phonetic spellings of genitival noun phrases before sentential clitics: [^{LU}ME]ŠEDI *karšuwāš*=*ma*=*šmaš*

⁶ The following collection has been gathered haphazardly over years of reading Hittite texts, but only since I realized the interest of the phenomenon. It does not purport to be exhaustive, but instances of assured multi-word phrases before the sentential clitics are surely uncommon.

⁷ The only case of separation I have found is in KBo 4.10 Vo 14: *n*=*an*=*kan kūš NIEŠ* DINGIR.MEŠ *dankuwai taknī šer QADU* NUMUN *ar/ha barnin/kandu*]. 'Let these oath gods wipe him off with his progeny (from) on the dark earth'. In this case one may construe *šer* as a postposition with the dative-locative and *ar/ha* as an independent preverb with *barninkandu*, but it is hard to separate this example from that six lines later in Vo 20 with *šer ar/ha* or view it as functionally different from *dankuyaz taknaz ar/ha barninkandu* in KUB 19.6+ iv 37. In both cases *ar/ha* appears to be marking 'away (from)', not telicity of the verb ('destroy utterly').

⁸ The alternate analysis of *kattan* as an unstressed postposition with the preceding noun 'feet' is made unlikely by the regular occurrence of such preverb combinations without any noun.

[*katt/i*=*šmi iyatta* 'The bodyguard of cutting walks with them' (KBo 11.39 i 10); 1 GU₄.APIN.LA *šarlumaš*=*kan apel ZI-ni šipandanzi* 'They consecrate one plow-ox of exaltation to his soul' (KUB 30.16+39.1 i 7); 1 GU₄ *ašgaš*=*ma*=*ka* [] 8 UDU=*ya akkantaš ZI-ni BAL-ti* 'He consecrates one cow of the gate and eight sheep to the soul of the dead' (KUB 30.27 Vo 8); NINDA.GUR₄.RA.MEŠ ^{buG}*haršiyaš*=(*š*)*maš per/an pē harkanzi* 'They hold out before them leavened loaves of the pithoi' and NINDA.GUR₄.RA.MEŠ *tarnaš*=(*š*)*maš paršiyanzi* 'They break for them leavened loaves of (one) *tarna*-(size)' (KBo 2.13 Ro 12 & 20). As we saw earlier, there is no orthographic constraint against splitting such combinations with the sentential clitics, so we may tentatively take these examples as showing that such noun phrases can occasionally form a single stress unit. Note, however, two salient facts about these examples.

First, each is likely to be a set phrase. The genitive defines the head noun as a particular subtype of a larger class: the 'cow of the gate' is surely not just any cow which happens to be stationed there, but one associated with the gate for some special purpose (whatever that may be). The 'bodyguard of cutting' is effectively a title reflecting the individual's duties, even if the precise significance eludes us. These syntagms are thus functionally equivalent to compounds (a formal possibility which is rare in Hittite appellatives).⁹ Recalling the citation of Kurylowicz above, we may legitimately wonder whether stress reduction/loss in a syntagm with adnominal genitive was limited in ordinary Hittite only to such fixed expressions. Extension of this possibility to any such phrase would be a feature of the poetic language.¹⁰

Second, every example has the order head noun + genitive. This ordering is attested for the adnominal genitive in Hittite, but it is not regular for the type cited above (see Yoshida 1987). Since the head noun in each case is written logographically, one might attribute the word order to the influence of Akkadian and Sumerian. That this probably is not the correct explanation is shown by the

⁹ Compare the remarks of Durnford (1971:72), although I cannot follow him in his inferences about the prehistoric situation. Neu (1986:115) has shown that set phrases with adnominal genitive can lead to univerbation (implying a single accent) in Hittite.

¹⁰ There is also limited evidence in prose for two asyndetically linked nouns appearing before sentential clitics: LUGAL MUNUS LUGAL=*kan* ^h*halenūwaz uwanzi* 'The king (and) queen come from the palace' (KUB 11.35 i 16-17) and ANA [ERIN.MEŠ ANŠE.KUR].RA.ĪJA=*wa* 1 ^{LU}GAL *per/an ĩūenut* 'Send one officer running ahead of the troops and horses' (KBo 4.3 iii 9). That such phrases can be separated is shown by ERIN.MEŠ=*wa*=*z* ANŠE.KUR.RA.MEŠ *per/an ĩūenut* 'Send troops and horses running (of yourself)' (KBo 5.13 iii 1). There is no question about the formulaic nature of these pairs, and the same is true of the one example in the epic where the meter requires a single stress: *nu*=*kan karuwi/ya* ^{URUDU}*ardāla* [*pa/rā tivandu* // *nepiš tekann*=*a kuēz ar/ha kuerer* 'Let them bring out the primeval saw with which they cut apart heaven and earth' (KUB 33.106 iii 52'-53').

one example known to me of attributive adjective plus head noun before a sentential clitic: ^{LÚ.MEŠ}SANGA ^{šuppaēš}=a=za ^{LÚ.MEŠ}SANGA ^{MUNUS.MEŠ}AMA.DINGIR ^{LÚ.MEŠ}GU^{DU}₁₂... (KUB 17.21 iii 4) (dupl. KUB 31.124 shows more archaic ^{LÚ.MEŠ}SANGA ^{šuppaēš}=a=z). Crucially, the same grouping occurs earlier in the text in a different order: ^{LÚ.MEŠ}SANGA ^{MUNUS.MEŠ}AMA.DINGIR ^{šuppaēš} ^{LÚ.MEŠ}SAN[G]A ^{LÚ.MEŠ}GU^{DU}₁₂ (KUB 17.21 ii 10-11). This differing order shows first that the ^š ^{LÚ.MEŠ}SANGA are one of a particular subtype of priest, not simply 'sacralized priests' (which would be a very odd characterization, since surely all the officials named are sacralized). Thus once again we are dealing with a set phrase, a title. Second, while the order noun + attributive adjective is attested in Hittite, it is in some sense "marked". The second occurrence cited shows that in this case the unmarked order is adjective plus noun. The reordering just when the set phrase occurs as a unit before the sentential clitic is surely significant, and this leads me to suspect the same for the adnominal genitives. Limitations of space prevent me from pursuing the matter further here, but I am confident that the issue does not affect the claim that we have in all cases a two-word phrase acting as a single stress unit.¹¹

Turning to combinations of preverb plus verb, I may cite the following single example for phrasal stress: GAM ^{tiyawazi}=šī(y)=at SUM-un 'I gave it to him for setting down' (KUB 40.88 iv 18). Further support is provided by the following: ^šallallā ^{pāuwanzi}=wa=za UGU ^{lienqanuwanza} 'I was made to swear an oath about desertion' (KBo 4.14 ii 46). Here ^{allallā} is the allative of a Luvian noun, but there can be no doubt from the overall use in the text cited that ^{allallā} ^{pāi}- 'going ^{allallā}' is a fixed expression, comparable to the American military's 'going A.W.O.L.' ('absent without leave'). The allative noun is thus effectively a preverb (cf. ^{arḫa} 'away', generally agreed to be the old allative of the noun ^{arḫa}- 'boundary, limit').

There is thus some evidence for preverb plus verb as a single stress unit. However, as Mark Hale and Andrew Garrett pointed out to me, it is probably not an accident that both of the examples cited are infinitives, i.e. verbal nouns. There is a strong possibility that the stress loss here takes place only in nominalizations, where again ^{katta} ^{tiyawar} 'setting down' is virtually equivalent to a compound.¹² There is no assurance that the phenomenon applies in prose to sequences of preverb plus finite verb. Given the prominence of the construction with supine plus ^{dāi-/tiya-} in the epic, one could easily suppose that it is the

¹¹ The second occurrence cited with the order adjective plus noun eliminates the possibility that we should merely read ^{LÚ.MEŠ}SANGA ^{šuppaēš}, with a complex determiner and a substantivized noun. For LÚ.SANGA as a determiner see Hoffner 1996:151f.

¹² Compare the hybrid Luvo-Hittite expression ^{peran} ^{paddumaš}/^{paddunaš} 'serving tray', lit. '(that) of carrying in front' (see Melchert 1994:34, for discussion).

source from which the stress-loss rule was extended.¹³ We have already seen several examples showing that preverb plus finite verb must also count as two stresses in some cases.

I have found no evidence for supine plus finite ^{dāi-/tiya-} clause-initially before the sentential clitics. This is hardly surprising, given the rarity of the construction in ordinary prose and the further requirement of marked clause-initial position for the verb. As evidence for the sequence as a single stress unit I can cite only the fact that to my knowledge the supine and its finite verb are never separated by any element (not even by the negative, which often does separate preverb and verb). This observation is, of course, merely suggestive and without probative value.

More disturbing is the lack of direct evidence for noun plus postposition as a single stress unit, as the epic meter seems to require. It is not hard to find cases where the sentential clitics appear between noun and postposition.¹⁴ Clisis in an adpositional phrase would be typologically unremarkable, and I have cited suggestive evidence for such in Cuneiform Luvian (Melchert 1994:247). However, as Durnford rightly emphasizes, extrapolating such rules even from one closely related language to another is dangerous. The status of this feature of epic meter vis-à-vis the ordinary language must therefore remain open. The same applies to the sequence of noun plus postposed ^{mān} 'like, as'. We have already discussed the evidence of the ordinary language for the conjunction ^{mān} 'if, whenever; when'.

In light of our investigation we may revise Durnford's rules regarding stress and the epic meter as follows: (1) any element stressed in the ordinary language may also count as stressed metrically (this includes nouns, adjectives, verbs, and adverbs/preverbs in any role); (2) there is limited evidence in ordinary language for stress reduction/loss in fixed expressions of adnominal genitive plus head noun, asyndetic pairs, and attributive adjective plus noun, from which the practice may have been extended in poetic language to all such syntagms; (3) there is also evidence that a preverb may form a single stress unit with an immediately following *nominalized* verb form, again a usage which could have been extended for metrical purposes to cases with finite verb; (4) as per

¹³ Cases with participle and infinitive could have also played a role. Once again the line between phrase and univerbation/compound is a fleeting one: cf. ^{ant(a)iyant-} '(in-house) son-in-law' or ^{parā(-)uwant-} 'supervisor'.

¹⁴ See e.g. ^{šuhḫi}=kan ^{šer}... 'On the roof...'. (KUB 6.45 i 4; clause-initial position assured). Once again, contra Durnford, some examples in the epic seem to require that both noun and postposition be stressed: ^{nu} ^{U-ni} ^{IGI-anda} // ^{idalawatar} ^{šan}/^{hiškezzi} 'He plots evil against the Storm-god' (KUB 33.9 i 7). Cf. *ibid* i 8 with duplicates.

Durnford, sentence-initial *nu* plus enclitics counts as unstressed;¹⁵ (5) the conjunction *mān* 'if, whenever; when' is regularly treated as unstressed in the epic meter, following ordinary Old and Middle Hittite usage (the one apparent counterexample may reflect a transmission error or the beginning of the Neo-Hittite practice by which *mān* is stressed); (6) evidence from prose is thus far lacking for noun plus postposition or noun plus *mān* 'as, like' as one stress unit; (7) the possibility that supine plus finite verb may form a single stress unit cannot be confirmed. Contra Durnford, there is neither evidence nor need for assuming that a direct object like *uddār* 'words' ever is unstressed.

Like Durnford, we conclude our discussion by testing this scheme on the one famous piece of likely native Hittite poetry, the "Song of Neša":

Nešaš TÚG.ḪLA Nešaš TÚG.ḪLA tiya=mu tiya
 nu=mu annaš=maš katta arnut tiya=mu tiya
 nu=mu uwaš=maš katta arnut tiya=mu tiya

'Clothes of Neša, clothes of Neša, bind me, bind!

'Bring me down (for burial) with my mother—bind me, bind!

'Bring me down (for burial) with my nurse(?)—bind me, bind!'¹⁶


Durnford, who wrongly assumes that adnominal genitives and preverbs *must* be counted as unstressed, at once concludes that we have three isometric lines of the same type as in the epic: four stresses divided into two equal cola. However, the obvious function of *tiya=mu tiya* as a refrain suggests the alternate analysis advocated by Ivanov, Eichner, and Watkins: alternating longer and shorter lines. We must test the various possibilities which the (optional) use of phrasal stress makes available in this case.

By any analysis *tiya=mu tiya* must count as two stresses. Parallelism also demands that the three preceding sequences be equivalent metrically. If all possibly stressed elements are counted as stressed, the first (half)-line would have four stresses (each adnominal genitive and head noun), but there is no way to find more than three in the remaining two lines (noun, preverb, and verb)—there is no match. If we assume that adnominal genitive plus head noun counts as a single unit, the first half-line has two stresses. We may also make the other

two lines have two stresses, if we assume that preverb plus immediately following finite verb counts as one stress, for which see above. We therefore conclude with Durnford, but on independent grounds, that the Song of Neša consists also of equal lines of four stresses with two cola.

Our investigation has found support in ordinary Hittite prose (albeit necessarily limited in scope) for the fundamental claim of McNeil and Durnford (and independently Eichner) that Hittite poetry employed a stress-based meter. I have argued, however, that many of Durnford's specific claims about the meter and Hittite syntactic stress must be seriously modified. First, we must make due allowance for optionality in the poetic use of stress loss/reduction. Second, available evidence suggests that such stress loss/reduction is a quite limited phenomenon in the ordinary language, and that the pattern of its usage in poetry represents a considerable extension. The exploitation of a feature of ordinary language for metrical purposes does support the idea that a stress-based meter is part of a native Hittite poetic tradition. This by no means settles the question of how the specific attested form of four stresses per line with two equal cola developed. Is this meter an independent Hittite invention, or an adaptation of a borrowed form which the Hittites found congenial with their native linguistic structure? This and other questions about Hittite meter remain to be answered.

¹⁵ The fact that the conjunctions *nu* and *ta* never undergo vowel-lengthening when occurring alone argues that they are indeed not fully stressed in ordinary Hittite (see Melchert 1994:151).

¹⁶ For previous treatments of the meter of this text see Ivanov (1965:16f), Eichner (1993:100ff), Gamkrelidze & Ivanov (1995:738), and Watkins (1995:248). I now follow Watkins' most recent interpretation by which the object of *arnu-* is the person to be buried (with the special sense of *arnu-* found in the Laws). The preverb *katta* (surely  *utan* in the Old Hittite original with genitive) serves here for both 'down' and 'with'.

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