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A Note on Hittite *tāia-* 'steal'

The etymology of the Hittite *mi*-verb *tāia-*, 3 sg. *tāiezzi* 'steal' is well-known: related lexical items outside Anatolian are Ved. *tāyú-*, *stāyú-*, Av. *tāiiu-* 'thief', OCS *tajq* 'I conceal', *tatb* 'thief' and Gk. *τητόμαι* 'be in want (of)'. POKORNY refers these forms to a root *\*(s)tāi-* 'heimlich um etwas bringen, hehlen, stehlen'; most modern scholars would dispense with the long diphthong and write simply *\*(s)teh<sub>2</sub>(i)-*.

It has long been suspected that the final glide of roots in *\*-eh<sub>x</sub>(i)-* originated in the present, whence it was subsequently extended to other forms. Favoring such an interpretation is the fact that roots of this structure often have full- or zero-grade presents in *\*-ie/o-* (cf. OSw. *dīa*, Latv. *dēju* < *\*dheh<sub>1</sub>(i)-* 'suck', Ved. *syāt(i)* < *\*seh<sub>2</sub>(i)-* or *\*sh<sub>2</sub>eh<sub>1</sub>(i)-* 'bind') beside unextended aorists (cf. Ved. *ādhāt*, *āsāt*): the present suffix here is presumably to be analyzed as *\*-i-* followed by the thematic vowel. From a phonological point of view *tāia-* could easily be explained as a formation of the same type, since *\*h<sub>2</sub>* was regularly lost before *\*-i-* in Hittite. A reconstruction *\*(s)teh<sub>2</sub>ie/o-*, however, would be morphologically unsatisfactory. Hittite is unique in typically showing athematic presents to "long-diphthongal" roots: the cognate of Ved. *syāt(i)* is 3 sg. *išhāi*, 3 pl. *išhīianzi*, while OCS *spějq* 'I succeed' (< *\*speh<sub>1</sub>(i)-*) is matched by 3 sg. *išpāi*, 3 pl. *išpīianzi* 'become sated'. I shall show elsewhere that this inflectional pattern is an archaism, and ultimately points to an IE type 3 sg. *\*TÉH-i-e*, 3 pl. *\*TH-i-énti* (or *\*TH-i-ēr*). For the moment it is sufficient to note that the expected present of *\*(s)teh<sub>2</sub>(i)-* in Hittite would have been not 3 sg. *tāiezzi*, pl. *tāianzi*, but 3 sg. *\*tāi*, pl. *\*tīianzi*.

In fact, *tāīezzi* is not a form of the same type as Latv. *dēju* or OCS *spějǫ* at all, but an iterative-causative in *\*-eīe/o-*. This is straightforwardly indicated by OCS *tajǫ*, the full paradigm of which (cf. 3 sg. *taitǫ*, inf. *taiti*) is that of an *i*-present. Both Hitt. *tāīa-* and Sl. *\*taji-* can be derived without difficulty from an IE stem *\*(s)toh<sub>2</sub>ī-eīe/o-*; morphologically, the relationship of such a form to the root *\*(s)teh<sub>2</sub>(i)-* would be precisely the same as that of Ved. *pāyāyati* 'causes to drink' (< *\*poh<sub>3</sub>ī-eīe/o-*) to IE *\*peh<sub>3</sub>(i)-* 'drink'. A further lexical item may thus be added to the growing list of Hittite verbs which have been shown to continue the IE iterative-causative category (cf. especially H. EICHNER, MSS 27, 35-44 (1969)). In the present case, moreover, the derivational isolation of *tāīa-* and *\*taji-* within their respective traditions and the absence of any other reconstructable present for the root *\*(s)teh<sub>2</sub>(i)-* make it exceedingly likely that *tāīezzi* and OCS *taitǫ* preserve intact a genuine IE form.