CHAPTER 20

Palaic

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1. HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL CONTEXTS

Palaic was once the spoken language of the land of Palā, generally agreed to have been located to the northwest of Hittite territory across the Halys River (modern Kızıl Irmak) in what is now north central Turkey. The country name is surely reflected in the later classical Blaëne and Paphlagonia. Palaic is attested in scarcely a dozen ritual fragments from the cuneiform archives of the ancient Hittite capital Hattuša (modern Boğazköy). The documents are contemporary with the Hittite (sixteenth to thirteenth centuries BC), including a couple of manuscripts from the Old Hittite period.

What little Palaic we have owes its preservation to liturgical use by the Hittites, chiefly for the cult of the Hattic god Za/iparfa. Palā, mentioned in the Old Hittite Laws as one of the three divisions of the Hittite state along with Hatti and Luwiya, appears only rarely in later texts. Its decline in importance is sometimes attributed to the depredations of the Kaskeans, a people of the northern mountains who caused serious problems for the Hittites throughout their history. It is likely that Palaic was extinct as a spoken language by the thirteenth century, and it may well have been so by the time of our earliest texts in the sixteenth. The extremely sparse documentation makes all aspects of the following description provisional. Palaic is interpreted largely in light of the much better attested Hittite so far as the facts permit. This is a reasonable and necessary procedure, but its obvious risks should constantly be borne in mind.

2. WRITING SYSTEM

Palaic was written by Hittite scribes, using the same version of the Old Babylonian cuneiform syllabary they employed for writing Hittite. The spelling conventions are the same as for Hittite (see Ch. 18, §2), with very few exceptions, the most notable being the use of special signs for a phoneme /f/ absent in Hittite (see below) and the near-total absence of logograms. The syllabary has V, CV, VC, and some CVC signs. It thus can indicate initial and final consonant clusters (and internal clusters of more than two) only by the use of "empty" vowels. Such sequences are interpreted largely on comparative and etymological grounds. There is no longer any reason to doubt that the use of *scriptio plena* (repeating the vowel of a CV or VC sign with the matching V sign) marks synchronic vowel length (see for Hittite, Kimball 1983 *passim*, *et al.*). The system uses both word spacing and paragraph-dividers.

Emil Forrer in 1919 already recognized Palaic as one of the eight distinct languages of the Boğazköy archives, and after a brief false start tentatively identified it as an Indo-European language closely related to Hittite. It was not until 1944, however, that Heinrich Otten was

able firmly to establish the status of Palaic on the basis of further documentation. Important further contributions to understanding the language were made by Kammenhuber (1959) and Carruba (1970). There have been no new textual finds since Carruba's work.

3. PHONOLOGY

3.1 Consonants

The phonemic inventory includes at least the following consonants:

(1) Palaic consonantal phonemes

p		t		k	
b		d		g	
		ts			
	f	s	ʒ		ħ
					ʕ
m		n			
		l	r		
w			y		

The absence of positive evidence, as in Hittite, for unitary labiovelars may easily be accidental, and there is a good chance that we should also assume a voiceless labiovelar stop /k^{w}/ in words such as *kui-* "who, which." Owing to a prehistoric change, there likely is no corresponding voiced stop, but there may be a labialized /ʕ^{w}/ in cases like *aḫu-* "drink."

3.1.1 Stops

Characterization of the Palaic stop series as voiceless versus voiced is based on their etymological value. The synchronic phonetic status of the stops in the three cuneiform languages Hittite, Palaic, and Cuneiform Luvian is a vexing and controversial problem: see Melchert 1994:13–21 for an extensive discussion with references. What is clear is that etymological voiceless stops appear as graphic and probably linguistically real geminates in intervocalic position, while inherited voiced stops appear as single stops (so-called *Sturtevant's Law*): in Palaic contrast particle *-ppa* < **-pe* (cf. Latin *nem-pe* "surely") with *apā-* "that" < **ob(ʰ)ó-*. It is tolerably certain that voiced stops have been generalized in word-final position (*šarkut=at* "__ed them," with preterite third singular -t [d] < **-t*), while it is likely but not assured that voiceless stops and fricatives have been generalized word-initially (see Melchert 1994:18–20, *et al.*). This partial neutralization of the voicing distinction may have contributed to a reanalysis of the stop contrast as one of fortis versus lenis, but this analysis cannot be regarded as proven.

3.1.2 Fricatives

The phoneme /f/ appears in Hattic loanwords into Palaic such as *wu$_{ú}$/pu-la-a-ši-na-* (a kind of bread). As the cited example shows, the fricative /f/ is indicated by a special series of cuneiform signs, consisting of *wa* plus a *mater lectionis* marking vowel quality, transliterated *wV$_{V}$* (sometimes alternately with graphic *p*). It cannot be excluded that in some or all cases the fricative is a voiced /v/ rather than /f/.

The voiceless coronal fricative is spelled with the cuneiform series which indicates a palatal sibilant in Akkadian, whence the conventional transliteration as š, as in Hittite.

There is no reason, however, to think that the sound represented is anything other than a dental/alveolar /s/. The sound transliterated as *z* is in most cases a voiceless affricate /ts/, but it cannot be ruled out that in some instances it indicates a voiced sibilant /z/ instead.

The phoneme rendered above as /ʒ/ represents a weak palatal fricative, the result of a prehistoric sequence of **h₂y* (the Proto-Indo-European "second laryngeal" plus **y*), spelled alternately with -g- and zero (see Watkins 1975:373 for the derivation and Carruba 1970:39 for the spelling). The phonetic definition of this sound obviously is merely an approximation, and one may entertain other possibilities.

Palaic shows both the regular and "lenited" reflexes of the Proto-Indo-European "second laryngeal" **h₂*, spelled intervocalically with geminate *-ḫḫ-* and simple *-ḫ-* respectively (for Proto-Anatolian "lenition" see Eichner 1973:79ff.). The characterization above as pharyngeals is nonbinding, and a pair of velar fricatives /x/ and /ɣ/ is equally possible.

3.2 Vowels

There are at least three vowel phonemes /a/, /i/, and /u/ and contrasting long /a:/, /i:/, and /u:/. It is very likely that there are also /e/ and /e:/, but the phonemic status of the latter is controversial (see Melchert 1994:198f., but also Carruba 1970:9, and Wallace 1983). While there are a few nonpredictable and thus contrastive long vowels, most surface vowel length is allophonic, due to synchronic rules of lengthening under the accent: for examples see the next paragraph. The vowel /a(:)/ combines with /y/ to form a falling diphthong /a(:)i/. The absence in our data of a corresponding /a(:)u/ is probably accidental.

3.3 Synchronic variation

There is limited but solid evidence for a synchronic rule in Palaic whereby the word accent shifts one syllable to the right with the addition of an enclitic (cf. the similar rule in Latin): underlying /ħáran-/ "eagle" appears as regular [ħá:ranas] in the genitive singular *ḫāranaš*, but compare nominative singular [ħará:s] in the phrase *ḫarāš=kuwar*. The fact that the length of the *a* in both syllables of "eagle" depends on the accent argues that the vowel in each case is underlyingly short, with the long [a:] a conditioned allophone. There are actually two such synchronic lengthening rules, one applying to all accented vowels in open syllables, the other to /a/ and /e/ in accented closed syllables (see Melchert 1994:204f. for further discussion).

Word-final *-n* is sporadically assimilated to an initial labial of a following clitic: *=am=pi* beside *=an=pa=ti*. The sibilant /s/ appears occasionally as *z* next to a sonorant (*=kuwar=zi* for *=kuwar=ši*) and rarely other consonants. This may or may not represent voicing to [z].

3.4 Phonotaxis

Phonotactic restrictions are unremarkable, so far as the extremely limited evidence permits a judgment. Final consonants are highly restricted: voiced stops (only /d/ is actually attested), /s/, /ʕ/, /n/, /r/, and /l/. The only attested final cluster is /-(n)ts/. As indicated above, probably only voiceless obstruents are permitted word-initially, along with /m/, /n/, /l/, and /w/. The absence of examples of initial /y/ is surely accidental, but the lack of initial /r/ is systematic, as elsewhere in the ancient Anatolian languages. Initial clusters are mostly limited to biconsonantal sequences of rising sonority, but there may be some cases of fricative plus stop. Medial clusters are predictably more varied and complex: for an exhaustive list of examples, see Melchert 1994:206f. All vowels occur freely in initial, medial, and final position. Sequences with hiatus are rare, but *iu* "come!" (cf. Hittite *eḫu*) certainly represents [í̯u] historically and probably also synchronically.

4. MORPHOLOGY

Palaic is a typical ancient Indo-European language in its morphological typology: that is, fusional, with a well-developed system of derivation and inflection, the latter exclusively suffixing, the former nearly so. However, it is also characteristically Anatolian in having a relatively limited set of inflectional categories in the nominal and verbal systems in comparison to Sanskrit or Ancient Greek.

4.1 Nominal morphology

The noun distinguishes two numbers, singular and plural, and two genders, animate and inanimate. There is no evidence for a separate dual or a feminine gender. There are at least six cases in the singular: nominative, vocative, accusative, genitive, dative, and locative. The last two cases are not distinguished in the plural, and as expected the nominative plural serves also for the vocative. It seems extremely likely that Palaic also has an ablative-instrumental corresponding to that of the other Anatolian languages, but no examples have yet been found. As usual in Indo-European, the nominative and accusative are not distinguished in the inanimate gender. In addition to the genitive case, Palaic also expresses possession by means of a relational adjective ("paternal house" for "father's house"), but this usage does not seem to be as widely developed as in the western Anatolian languages. It is impossible to tell whether there is any functional distinction between the two constructions.

The case endings are mostly recognizable as Indo-European: animate nominative singular /-s/, vocative singular zero, animate accusative singular /-n/, inanimate nominative-accusative singular zero or /-an/, genitive singular /-as/, dative singular /-i/ or /-ai/, animate nominative plural /-es/ (or /-as/ < *-*ōs*), inanimate nominative-accusative plural /-a/. The animate accusative plural is not securely attested. The locative ending /-a/ is cognate with the allative of Hittite continuing Proto-Indo-European *-h_2e and *-oh_2 (cf. for the latter Latin *quō* "whither"). The dative-locative plural /-as/ matches the endings of Hittite and Lycian, reflecting Proto-Indo-European *-*os* (cf. Latin -*bus*, etc. minus the initial labial).

4.2 Pronouns

The only reasonably well-attested pronominal stem is the relative-interrogative *kui*-, but the existence of the characteristic Anatolian demonstratives *kā*- "this" and *apā*- "that" is at least assured. For the few other extant pronominal forms see Carruba 1970:44.

4.3 Verbal morphology

The verb is inflected for singular and plural and the expected three persons. There are two moods, indicative and imperative, and two tenses, present (also used for the future) and preterite. Beside the active voice there is a medio-passive, surely with the usual range of functions, although the few attested examples happen to be *media tantum* with intransitive meaning ("lie" and "be warm"). The basic verbal stem may express various aspectual nuances according to context, but imperfective aspect may also be overtly marked by suffixes cognate with those which serve the same function in Hittite: *pī-ša* "give!" (distributive, with multiple objects) or *i-škā* "be!" (durative, in a construction indicating possession). The verbal endings formally are cognate with those of the other Anatolian languages, but the limited evidence suggests that the distribution in Palaic does not quite match that of Hittite or Luvian.

There is an infintive in *-una* (e.g., *aḫuna* "to drink") cognate with that in Luvian. Palaic interestingly appears to employ both *-ant-* and *-amma-* as suffixes to form participles (*takkuwānteš* and *patamman*), but the meaning of the latter example is quite uncertain, and it may be a lexicalized relic. It is likely that there is a single functional category expressing an attained state (passive for transitive verbs), as in Hittite (see Ch. 18, §4.4.5).

4.4 Morphological miscellanea

Palaic has a range of nominal stem-classes (at least *-a-*, *-i-*, *-u-*, *-(n)t-*, *-n-*, and *-r-*) and probably two verbal conjugations corresponding to the *mi-* and *ḫi*-conjugations of Hittite (see Ch. 18, §§4.4.7; 4.4.9), although evidence for the latter is arguable. It is not clear to what extent Palaic shows the phenomenon of "i-mutation" so characteristic of the western Anatolian languages (see Starke 1990:71ff.). Several well-known Indo-European nominal and verbal derivational suffixes are attested, and further data would undoubtedly yield further examples.

4.5 Compounds

There is one assured compound: *aš=kummawa-*, literally "mouth-pure," i.e., "sacralized and fit for the gods to eat" (see Watkins 1987:399f., after Szemerényi). The absence of additional examples is undoubtedly due to chance.

5. SYNTAX

5.1 Word order and clause structure

As an inflected language, Palaic predictably has rather free word order. The unmarked order is SOV (Subject–Object–Verb), but others are by no means rare. Essentially any major constituent may be placed in clause-initial position for emphasis: verb, direct or indirect object, adverb, and preverb are all attested besides subject.

There are no assured cases of coordinated clauses. Probably not by accident there are also no clear examples of coordinated noun phrases, while asyndeton is common. Palaic has the enclitic conjunctions *-ku* and *-ḫa*, but the latter certainly means "also," and probably so does the former. Neither is a simple connective "and." The only certain subordinating conjunction is *mān* "when(ever), if," cognate with Hittite *mān*. Relative clauses preceding the main clause with a resumptive pronoun are assured (*kuiš=a . . . =apan* "whichever . . . that one"), and there likely is at least one example of a postposed relative clause.

5.2 Agreement

Gender and number agreement is mostly of a standard sort, but Palaic does preserve the Proto-Indo-European construction whereby a neuter plural (actually an old collective) as subject takes a singular verb: *tilila ḫāri* "the t. (a food) are warm" (lit. "is warm"). As in other Anatolian languages, one also finds in Palaic a singular verb apparently agreeing with the first of multiple subjects: *lukīt=ku tabarnaš tawannannaš* "The king (and) queen have also distributed" (*lukīt* is preterite third singular).

5.3 Clitics

The Indo-European Anatolian languages are famous for their use of clitics, and Palaic is no exception. There is ample evidence for the appearance of subject and object pronouns and various sentence particles (often ill-defined) as enclitics to the first accented word in the clause (so-called *Wackernagel's Law*): *arūn=am=pi witeši* "tall=him=particle you shall build," that is, "You shall build him tall." In addition, however, Palaic shows sporadic cliticism of words which are normally accented: *nū=wašu* (sentence conjunction plus "good") versus normal *wāšu* (note the loss of length on the first vowel of the noun, as per the rule mentioned above). The conditioning and function of this usage are unclear. There is also evidence for enclitic use of the demonstrative (see Melchert 1984:28ff.). The apparent restriction of this usage to the neuter singular seems strange, but is probably paralleled in Luvian.

6. LEXICON

The severely restricted corpus precludes definitive statements about the lexicon: only twenty-two of the words in the Swadesh-Voegelin hundred-word core vocabulary list are attested and identified. One cannot place too much weight on the fact that 87 percent of these are inherited. The facts of Hittite suggest, however, that the nature of our evidence presents a misleading picture. The apparent heavy influence of Hattic is probably due simply to the fact that our texts nearly all deal with the cult of the Hattic pantheon. Palaic has also borrowed at least the title for the Hittite king, *tabarna-*, from Luvian (not from Hattic), and this is likely for the queen's title, *tawananna-*, as well.

7. READING LIST

Carruba (1970) provides a convenient and excellent vade mecum: all texts in transliteration (but without translation), grammar, and lexicon, plus bibliography to that date.

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