9

The surface position of Hittite subordinating *kuit*

H. Craig Melchert

9.1 Introduction

We find in Middle and New Hittite the use of *kuit*, neuter nominative-accusative singular of the interrogative-relative pronoun, as a subordinating conjunction.[1] Its most frequent sense by far is causal 'since, because' (compare Latin *quod*), but like the typologically comparable Sanskrit *yád*, it may express a range of relationships of the subordinate to the main clause.[2] Eventually in New Hittite it functions as a complementizer 'that' with verbs of perception ('to see,' 'to hear,' 'to know'), but notably not verbs of speech: see Cotticelli-Kurras (1995).[3]

As elucidated by the late Gary Holland in a series of conference presentations unfortunately never published (e.g. Holland 2011), the first steps leading to this grammaticalization may be observed in the MH Maşat Letters:[4]

(1) *HKM* 3:3–4 (Maşat letter; MH/MS)

ŠA LÚ.KÚR=mu	kuit uttar	ḫatrāeš	n=at
enemy-GEN.SG=1SG.DAT	which word-ACC.SG	write-PST2SG	CONJ=it
AŠME			
hear-PST1SG			

'I have heard the matter of the enemy that you wrote to me about.'

(2) *HKM* 2:4–8 (Maşat letter; MH/MS)

ŠA ANŠE.KUR.RA.ḪI.A=mu	kuit uttar	ḫatrāeš
horse-GEN.PL=1SG.DAT	which word-ACC.SG	write-PST2SG

[1] I assume the standard division of Hittite texts and manuscripts into successive periods labeled Old, Middle, and New (often conventionally dated very approximately to 1670–1450, 1450–1380, and 1380–1200 BC). The sigla OH, MH, and NH refer to the date of composition, OS, MS, and NS to the date of the manuscripts. In glosses DN = divine name, GN = place name, PN = personal name, PTCL = particle.

[2] The claim in Hoffner and Melchert (2008: 415) of an exclusively causal sense is likely an oversimplification, but compelling instances of temporal or concessive use are rare.

[3] Her alleged example with 'to write' (1995: 93) does not exist.

[4] I stress that this tells us nothing about the dating of these letters relative to other MH texts. They are merely by far our largest collection of MH correspondence.

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n=ašta kāšma ANŠE.KUR.RA.ḪI.A karū parā neḫḫun
CONJ=PTCL PTCL horse-ACC.PL already out send-PST1SG
'As to/for/regarding the matter of the horses that you wrote to me about,
I have already sent horses out.'

In (1) *ŠA* LÚ.KÚR *kuit uttar* 'the matter of the enemy which' is part of a regular preposed relative clause resumed by *=at* 'it,' but in (2) *ŠA* ANŠE.KUR.RA.ḪI.A *kuit uttar* cannot be so analyzed, since it is never resumed in the main clause: it has become part of a subordinate clause to which the following clause merely refers.

Suppression of the contextually redundant *uttar* 'matter' leads to a fully grammaticalized subordinating conjunction *kuit* '(as to the fact) that, (seeing) that':

(3) *HKM* 7:3–10 (Maşat letter; MH/MS)
kiššan=mu kuit ḫatrāeš kāša=wa LÚ.MEŠšapašalliēš
thus=1SG.DAT that write-PST2SG PTCL=QUOT spy-ACC.PL
piyenun… nu=šša apēdani uddanī
send-PST1SG CONJ=PTCL that matter-DAT-LOC.SG
weranza=pat ēš
call-PTCP.NOM.SG=PTCL be-IMV2SG
'As to the fact that you wrote to me as follows: "I have sent spies…"
(further quoted speech), be fully attentive (lit. called) to that matter!'

In favorable contexts it is a short further step from 'seeing that' to 'because, since,' but the eventual bleaching to a complementizer 'that' is also unsurprising.[5]

9.2 Standard position of subordinating *kuit*

Given its derivational history, we would expect *kuit* to stand in C of CP (see the analysis of Sanskrit *yád* by Hale 2007: 204), and its typical position early in its clause supports this. It is important to make explicit that Hittite does not have overt *wh*-movement, as shown by Goedegebuure (2009) and confirmed by Huggard (2011: 88–91). However, once grammaticalized as a subordinator/complementizer, *kuit* would behave like other Hittite subordinating conjunctions like *māḫḫan* 'when, as soon as,' *kuitman* 'while, until,' and others. Unlike them, *kuit* never occurs clause-initially.

As per Melchert (2015: 5–8), this reflects that *kuit* is prosodically weak and cannot occur first in a phonological phrase, requiring a full phonological word to its left as its host. That its typical clause-second position is mostly phonologically

[5] I underscore that the conjunction *kuit* is an innovation of Middle Hittite. It is never found in OH/OS or in NS copies of assured OH compositions. For arguments that OH *kuit=a* is not a form of the subordinating conjunction see Goedegebuure (forthcoming).

conditioned by prosodic flip and not syntactically is shown by structures that cannot be explained as due to syntactic movement:

(4) *KBo* 4.4 iii 29–30 (Annals of Muršili II; NH)
nu=mu URU Iyaḫreššaš kuit KUR
CONJ=1SG.DAT GN.NOM.SG because land-NOM-ACC.SG
URU Piggainareššа=ya kūrur ēšta
GN.GEN.SG=and hostile-NOM-ACC.SG be-PST3SG
'Because Iyahressa and the land of Piggainaressa were hostile to me.'[6]

(5) *KUB* 5.3+ ii 1 (Oracular inquiry; NH)
ANA ÚŠ kuit šer *ŠA* DINGIR-*LIM* TUKU.TUKU-za
plague-DAT-LOC.SG because for deity-GEN.SG anger-NOM.SG
SIxSÁ-at
determine-MED-PASS.PST3SG
'Because anger of a deity was determined for the plague.'

In (4) the position of *kuit* violates the coordinate-structure constraint, while in (5) the required phonological hosting of *kuit* comes at the cost of making the postpositional phrase *ANA* ÚŠ *šer* (*ḫingani šer*) a discontinuous constituent.

9.3 The problem

There are, however, at least thirty examples where subordinating *kuit* appears quite late in its clause:[7]

(6) *KUB* 14.1 Vo 89–90 (Indictment of Madduwatta; MH/MS)
nu m Attaršiyaš LÚ URU Piggaya=ya *ANA* d UTU-*ŠI*
CONJ PN-NOM.SG man-NOM.SG GN-GEN.SG=and His Majesty-DAT.SG
LÚ.MEŠ kurēwaneš kuit
self-governing-NOM.PL because
'Since Attarsiya and the man of Piggaya are self-governing with respect to His Majesty.'

Here *kuit* follows not only a full subject, but also two constituents of the predicate. In a nominal sentence it stands last, but if an optional *ašanzi* '(they) are' had been used, it would have been pre-verbal, as in (7):

(7) *KBo* 5.3 iv 11–12 (Deeds of Šuppiluliuma I; NH)
nu *ABU=YA* genzuwalaš kuit ēšta
CONJ father=my-NOM.SG merciful-NOM.SG since be-PST3SG

[6] Hittite often shows singular number agreement with the second of conjoined subjects.
[7] I have systematically searched digitized data bases of assured MH compositions in MS and of assured NH compositions. Finding no differences in usage, I then also searched MH texts in NS copies. These added only a handful of further instances.

n=aš	*ŠA* MUNUS-*TI*	memiyani	kāri
CONJ=3SG.NOM	woman-GEN.SG	word-DAT-LOC.SG	wish-DAT-LOC.SG
tiyat			
step-PST3SG			

'Because my father was merciful, he acceded to the word of the woman.'

My first response to this pattern was to entertain that *kuit* might stand in the preverbal focus position established by Goedegebuure (2014: Chapter 7). However, several facts quickly refuted this idea. First, it is far from clear that the replacing and selective focus she identifies for this position makes sense for causal *kuit*. Furthermore, not all apparent instances of *kuit* in the predicate can possibly be construed as preverbal:

(8) *HKM* 8:12–19 (Maşat letter; MH/MS)

n=ašta	LÚ.KÚR	*QATAMMA*	kuit	KUR-e
CONJ=PTCL	enemy-NOM.SG	thus	because	land-DAT-LOC.SG
anda	lammar	lammar	iattari	
into	at every	moment	march-PRS3SG	

'Since the enemy thus enters the land at every moment.'

Here the *kuit* appears after the subject and a manner adverb of the predicate but is separated from the verb by a locatival phrase and a temporal adverb.[8]

9.4 One provisional analysis

What all examples of postponed *kuit* known to me have in common is that *kuit* follows a discourse-salient constituent. This fact suggests the possibility that the late position of *kuit* in cases like (6)–(8) might be epiphenomenal.

It is well established that constituents in Hittite in additive focus marked with the particle *=a/ya* 'also, even' are regularly fronted, appearing to the left of full nominal or accented pronominal subjects, unless it is the subject that is itself in such focus: see Goedegebuure (2014: Chapter 8)—also for recognition of the quite distinct use of *=a/ya* for genuine clause coordination. Similarly, those marked with the particle *=a/ma*, indicating contrastive focus, are also overwhelmingly fronted: see for the exceptional non-fronted examples Sideltsev and Molina (2015).[9] In

[8] See also the example in *KBo* 4.4 iii 59 (NH). Some instances where the *kuit* is not strictly preverbal are merely apparent exceptions, conditioned by the requirement of a phonological word as host: *ammuk=ma=za parā ḫandānza kuit* UN-*aš ešun* 'Because I was a providential person' (*KUB* 1.1+ i 46–47; NH). Syntactically, *kuit* is preverbal. As per Melchert (2015), the leftmost constituent in Hittite phonological phrases carries the primary phrasal stress—here the DP-initial adjective *parā ḫandānza*, by which *kuit* must be hosted. Compare for the resulting discontinuous constituent example (5), where the *kuit* likewise follows the initial constituent of the postpositional phrase.

[9] My formulation in terms of fronting follows common practice and is not intended to make any theoretical claim.

Melchert (forthcoming) I show that non-focused fronted constituents represent topicalization of various types and that both multiple topics and combinations of additive or contrastive focus with topicalization (in that order) are also far from rare:

(9) *KBo* 4.6 Ro 21–23 (Prayer regarding Gassuliyawiya; NH)
INA ^{URU}Samūha kuwapi[10] tuk ^{d}Lelwanin ^{f}Gassuliyawias
GN.LOC when 2SG.ACC DN.ACC PN.NOM
tuēl GÉME-*TUM* Ù-az austa
2SG.GEN slave-NOM.SG dream-ABL see-PST3SG
'When in Samuha your slave Gassuliyawiya saw you, Lelwani, in a dream.'

The locatival phrase 'in Samuha' is a new topic, while 'you, Lelwani' is anaphoric, raising to topichood the goddess introduced in the two preceding clauses.

(10) *KUB* 22.70 Ro 82 (Oracular inquiry; NH)
kī=ma EGIR-anda ^{f}Nārus KAxU-az kissan
this-ACC.SG=PTCL afterwards PN.NOM mouth-ABL as follows
IQBI
say-PST3SG
'But this afterwards Naru said from (her own) mouth as follows' (direct quote follows)

As frequently with a change of topic, the direct object 'this' is in contrastive focus, while the temporal adverb is merely topicalized. Both appear to the left of the full nominal subject, not in their usual position in the predicate.[11]

Since strict proof of fronting in Hittite requires appearance of a constituent of the predicate to the left of a full nominal or pronominal subject, I naturally concentrated entirely on such cases in establishing topicalization. There is no doubt, however, that subjects may also be in additive or contrastive focus, and these co-occur with *kuit*:

(11) *KBo* 2.6+ iii 6 (Oracular inquiry; NH)
GIDIM=ya kuit TUKU.TUKU-uanza
dead-NOM.SG=also because angry-NOM.SG
'Because also the dead (person) is angry.'

For an example with contrastive focus *=ma* see *KBo* 5.13 i 12 (NH). In such instances where a single constituent is focused or topicalized no prosodic flip is necessary for the *kuit* to be properly hosted.

[10] The surface position of *kuwapi* 'when' is phonologically conditioned like that of *kuit*.

[11] Several who read a draft of Melchert forthcoming protested that some constituents that I label topics are unlikely to have such a role. I must insist that word order and in some cases scopal facts show that temporal and local expressions in the left periphery in Hittite, both nominal case forms and adverbs, cannot be scene-setting elements in FrameP, but must be analyzed as displaced from their unmarked predicatival positions.

Given undeniable cases of fronting of a contrastively focused constituent plus a topic, the following clause with postponed *kuit* without a full nominal subject may be analyzed just like (10):[12]

(12) *KBo* 4.14 iii 23–24 (Charges of a king against a subordinate; NH)
tuk=ma karū kuit kē INIM.MEŠ peran
2SG.DAT=PTCL previously since these words-NOM-ACC.PL before
GAM tiyan DÙ-nun
down place-PTCP.NOM-ACC.SG make-PST1SG
'Since I had already had these words laid down before you.'

The 'you' has been fronted away from its postposition 'before' because it is in contrastive focus versus the generalized 'personal servants of the king' in the preceding context, while 'already' is a new topic reminding the addressee that the admonition that follows had already been made before.

Subjects are par excellence topics in a discourse, and I am not aware of any facts precluding the assumption that Hittite subjects in surface clause-initial position may have undergone a normally invisible raising to a TopicP in the left periphery. In (8), repeated here as (13), the preceding context shows that the subject 'the enemy' is a resumed-mention topic across four clauses, while 'thus' is also an anaphoric topic linked to the predicates of those clauses. Their topicality is confirmed by the instruction that follows (with the topicalization of 'thus' implying impatience/frustration on the part of the speaker, the Hittite king, at the ease with which the enemy has entered the country and committed various depredations):

(13) *HKM* 8:12–19 (Maşat Letter; MH/MS)
n=ašta LÚ.KÚR *QATAMMA* kuit KUR-e
CONJ=PTCL enemy-NOM.SG thus because land-DAT-LOC.SG
anda lammar lammar iattari
into at every moment march-PRS3SG
'Since the enemy enters the land thus at every moment,' (if you catch up with him somewhere, you should strike him!)

Likewise in (6), repeated here as (14):

(14) *KUB* 14.1 Vo 89-90 (Indictment of Madduwatta; MH/MS)
nu ^{m}Attaršiyaš LÚ ^{URU}Piggaya=ya ANA
CONJ PN-NOM.SG man-NOM.SG GN-GEN.SG=and His
^{d}UTU=ŠI $^{LÚ.MEŠ}$kurēwaneš kuit
Majesty-DAT.SG self-governing-NOM.PL because
'Since Attarsiya and the man of Piggaya are self-governing with respect to His Majesty' (while Madduwatta is a servant of His Majesty. Why has he aligned himself with them?)

[12] The same applies to *KUB* 14.8 Vo 27–28 and *KUB* 23.1+ ii 8–9 (both NH).

Both the coordinated subject and 'His Majesty' are resumed-mention topics, but the identification of the former as 'self-governing' is not merely a comment with new information, but a new topic, whose saliency lies in the contrast with the status of Madduwatta as a mere servant of the Hittite king. See (23) below for another example of three topicalized constituents in a single clause.

Example (7), repeated here as (15), may be analyzed in the same fashion:

(15) *KBo* 5.3 iv 11–12 (Deeds of Šuppiluliuma I; NH)

nu	*ABU=YA*	genzuwalaš	kuit	ēšta	n=aš
CONJ	father=my-NOM.SG	merciful-NOM.SG	since	be-PST3SG	CONJ=he
ŠA MUNUS-*TI*	memiyani	kāri		tiyat	
woman-GEN.SG	word-DAT-LOC.SG	wish-DAT-LOC.SG		step-PST3SG	

'(Precisely) because my father was merciful, he acceded to the word of the woman.'

Once again, the fact that the father of the king was merciful is not a mere comment characterizing the resumed-mention topic of 'my father,' but a new topic underscoring that he finally yielded to the plea, which he had previously rejected, in an unusual, unexpected act of compassion.[13] Likewise in the example cited in footnote 8: *ammuk=ma=za parā ḫandānza kuit* UN-*aš ešun* '(Precisely) because I was a providential person.' This is not merely an affirmation that the author Hattušili III was blessed, but an insistence that he uniquely enjoyed the providence of Ishtar, his patron goddess.

As is typical in inflected languages where the person and number of the subject are expressed in the endings of the finite verb, Hittite uses accented pronominal subjects only where they are salient (Hoffner and Melchert 2008: 278). Their very use thus suggests that they are topics. Besides the example just cited see also:

(16) *KUB* 14.1 Ro 26 (Indictment of Madduwatta; MH/MS)

ug=a=wa=za		manninkuwan	kuit	nu=war=at
1SG.NOM=PTCL=QUOT=REFL		near	since	CONJ=QUOT=it
ūk	ḫūdāk walaḫmi			
1SG.NOM	at once strike-PRS1SG			

'(Precisely) because I am close by, I will strike it (the hostile country) at once.'

In these words of Madduwatta the first 'I' is in contrastive focus to the troops of the Hittite king mentioned in the preceding clause. The topicalized 'near' is also implicitly contrastive with the more distant position of the Hittite troops. Note the anaphoric topic use of *ūk* 'I' in the second clause, despite the marking of the

[13] One may contrast *KUB* 19.37 ii 15–17 (Annals of Muršili II, NH), where the cause-effect relationship is entirely predictable and *kuit* stands in its typical position: *nu=mu* ^{URU}*Timmuḫalaš kuit kappilalliš ēšta…nu=kan* ^{URU}*Timmuḫalan ANA* ^{d}U EN=*YA šippandaḫḫun* 'Because Timmuhala was hostile to me … I consecrated Timmuhala to the Storm-god, My Lord' (making the city off limits to its previous inhabitants).

subject on the finite verb. An unmarked formulation of the same content would have read *nu=wa=za manninkuwan kuit nu=war=at ḫūdāk walaḫmi*, where in the nominal sentence the use of the reflexive particle sufficiently marks the person and number, given the first-person singular *wal(a)ḫmi* in the following clause (Hoffner and Melchert 2008: 362–363).

(17) *KUB* 17.21 iv 5–6 (Prayer of Arnuwanda I and Ašmunikal; MH/MS)

nu	wēš	DINGIR.MEŠ-aš	kuit	naḫḫanteš	nu
CONJ	1PL.NOM	god-DAT-LOC.PL	since	fearing-NOM.PL	CONJ

DINGIR.MEŠ-aš	$EZEN_4$.HI.A	EGIR-an=pat	arwašta
god-GEN.PL	festival-DAT-LOC.PL	behind=PTCL	stand-PRS1PL

'(Precisely) because we are god-fearing, we always attend to (lit. stand behind) the festivals of the gods.'

Although the immediately preceding context is lacking, the entire theme of the prayer makes it clear that 'we' (the pious Hittites) are being contrasted with the impious Kaskeans who have despoiled the gods' temples and stolen the offerings to them. Since the verb *naḫḫ-* 'to fear' applies to all kinds of fear, the gods also surely stand in contrast to the Kaskeans: the Hittites fear the gods, not the enemy. I emphasize once again that the same content could have been unambiguously expressed in an unmarked construction: *nu=za* DINGIR.MEŠ-*aš kuit naḫḫanteš*, where the reflexive particle plus the first-person plural verb of the second clause would have assured a reading: 'Because we are fearing toward the gods.'

I am confident that other combinations of contrastive focus plus topic standing before *kuit* may be analyzed in a similar fashion in all cases with sufficient context,[14] and likewise subject DPs plus a second topic (DP or adverb) preceding *kuit*.[15] Two other classes of examples call for further comment. First, there is a case where one of the two putatively topicalized constituents is the sentence negation:

(18) *IBoT* 1.36 i 56 (Instructions for the Royal Bodyguard; MH/MS)[16]

nu	^{LÚ}*MEŠEDI*	^{LÚ}Ì.DU_8	wašduli
conj	bodyguard-nom.sg	gatekeeper-acc.sg	error-dat-loc.sg

ēpzi	^{GIŠ}ŠUKUR=wa	*ŪL*	kuit	ašta
seize-prs3sg	spear-acc.sg=quot	not	since	see-pst2sg

'The bodyguard shall catch the gatekeeper in (his) error (saying): "Since you did not see the spear"' (if some person tries to go up, will you ever see him?)

[14] MH/MS: *HKM* 44:2–6, *HKM* 55: 36–39, *KUB* 17.21 iv 6–10; MH/NS: *KUB* 13.2 i 5–6; NH: *KBo* 3.4+ i 16–18, *KBo* 4.4 ii 9 and iii 59–63, *KBo* 5.6 i 18, *KBo* 5.8 i 37–38, *KBo* 11.1 Vo 15, *KBo* 19.76+*KUB* 14.20 i 37, *KUB* 1.1+ iv 5–6, *KUB* 21.19+ i 23.

[15] MH/MS: *HKM* 17:26–30, *KUB* 14.1 Vo 56 and 85, *KUB* 23.72 Ro 36, *KUB* 31.79 Ro 7.

[16] I regard this text as a MH composition, with Goedegebuure (2014: 21) and others. The very use of subordinating *kuit* (three times) argues against the tentative suggestion of Miller (2013: 103) that the text is OH.

The 'spear' is a resumed-mention topic, the theme of the passage being that the gatekeeper is not to allow bodyguards to pass carrying their weapon, but the negative is a new topic, whose topicality is explained by the rest of the direct speech of the bodyguard. That the sentence negation may be topicalized is independently established:

(19) *Bo* 86/299 ii 98–99 (Treaty of Tuthaliya IV with Kuruntiya; NH)

n=at	katta	tuel=pat	NUMUN-anza	ḫarzi
CONJ=it	subsequently	2SG.GEN=PTCL	progeny-NOM.SG	hold-PRS3SG
ŪL=at=ši=kan		arḫa danzi		
not=it=3SG.DAT=PTCL		away take-PRS3PL		

'Subsequently only your progeny shall possess it (the land of Tarhuntassa). They shall not take it away from them!'[17]

In an unmarked formulation we would find *n=at=ši=kan ŪL arḫa danzi*. The sentence negation is also frequently, though not obligatorily, topicalized in negative rhetorical questions (Hoffner and Melchert 2008: 341 and 343 with references).

There are also five examples where *kuit* follows a full subject (standing or not in contrastive focus) plus the finite verb. One instance will suffice as an illustration:

(20) *KUB* 13.4 i 25–26 (Instructions for priests and temple personnel; MH/NS)

nu=šši	naššu adanna	peškezzi	našma=šši	akuwanna
CONJ=3SG.DAT	either eat-INF	give-PRS3SG	or=3SG.DAT	drink-INF
peškezzi	nu=za	apāš	EN=*ŠU*	
give-PRS3SG	CONJ=REFL	3SG.NOM	master=his-NOM.SG	
azzikezzi	akkuškezzi	kuit	n=aš	
eat-PRS3SG	drink-PRS3SG	because	CONJ=3SG.NOM	
ZI-an	arḫa	lānza		
soul-ACC.SG	away	release-PTCP.NOM.SG		

'He (a servant) either gives him (his master) to eat or gives him to drink, and (precisely) because he, his master, eats and drinks, he is relaxed in his mind' (and is favorably attached to him)[18]

Both *apāš* EN=*ŠU* and *azzikezzi akkuškezzi* are anaphoric topics, the former a resumed-mentioned topic over four intervening clauses that describe the servant. Use of the accented third-person pronoun and the appositional 'his lord' is motivated to make clear the shift of topic from the servant to the master. The latter's act of eating and drinking is also promoted to topichood, since it is the triggering event for the master's attitude.[19]

[17] Hittite here uses third singular agreement with the collective singular *warwalan-* 'seed; progeny.'

[18] All the finite verb forms show the so-called marked imperfective stem, here expressing habituality. Hittite uses an accusative of respect for 'as to his soul/mind.'

[19] The other examples are all NH: *KBo* 3.6+ iii 45–46, *KBo* 16.17+2.5a+5 iii 34–35, *KUB* 14.13+ iv 3–5, and *KUB* 14.14+ Vo 29–31.

However, there is a non-trivial issue regarding the notion that a finite verb may be fronted as a topic. Bauer (2011) refuted earlier claims regarding verb fronting in Hittite, showing that virtually all examples involve either contrastive focus marked with *=a/ma* or less frequently additive focus marked by *=a/=ya*. It is noteworthy, however, that the single exception she cites (2011: 246, note 33) involves precisely causal *kuit*:

(21) *KUB* 1.1 iv 11–13 (Autobiography of Hattušili III; NH)
šallanunun=war=an kuit ammuk nu=war=an
make great-PST1SG=QUOT=3SG.ACC since 1SG.NOM CONJ=QUOT=3SG.ACC
ḫuwappi DI-ešni ḫuwappi DINGIR-*LIM*-ni
evil lawsuit-DAT-LOC.SG evil deity-DAT-LOC.SG
parā *ŪL* kuwapikki tarnaḫḫun
forth not ever/anywhere let go- PST1SG
'(Precisely) because I (and no one else) made him great, I never/nowhere consigned him to an evil lawsuit (or) to an evil deity.'[20]

The use of the accented subject pronoun suggests that we are dealing with another instance of multiple topics, but the author chose here to give the goddess's action more prominence than her responsibility for it. Obviously, the topicalization of the subject cannot strictly be proven. In any case, this example suggests that the finite verb may in fact be topicalized in a causal clause marked by *kuit*, thus permitting the same analysis of examples like (20).

Finally, I feel compelled to acknowledge what is arguably the most extreme case of putatively late *kuit*:

(22) *KUB* 1.1+ iv 7–8 (Autobiography of Hattušili III; NH)
ammuk=ma LUGAL-*UTTA* ^{d}*IŠTAR* GAŠAN=*YA*
1SG.DAT=PTCL kingship-ACC.SG DN.NOM lady=my-NOM.SG
annišan=pat kuit memišket
formerly=PTCL since speak-PST3SG
"Since it was I to whom, Ishtar, My Lady, had repeatedly promised the kingship before" (at that time Ishtar, My Lady, appeared to my wife in a dream (saying): 'I will proceed ahead of your husband, and all of Hattusha will come over to the side of your husband')

The 'me' is in contrastive focus. It is followed by no less than three topicalized constituents. This clause is paragraph-initial, and one might suppose that the contrastive focus on 'me' underscores a change of topic from Sipaziti, the topic of the preceding two clauses.

However, the so-called autobiography of Hattušili III is one of the most highly rhetorical compositions in Hittite literature, and anyone reading the text or

[20] Bauer gives no explicit textual reference, but I am confident that this is the single case of verb fronting without contrastive focus involving a causal subordinate clause to which she refers.

hearing it recited would know that the contrast is actually with Hattušili's archrival Urhi-Tešup. The latter is last mentioned by name 16 clauses earlier, but he is the running theme of the entire intervening discourse, and Sipaziti is introduced only as his subordinate. Moreover, shortly after the last naming of Urhi-Tešup comes a rhetorical question about him put in the mouth of a hypothetical interlocutor and addressed to Hattušili (*KUB* 1.1+ iii 74–75): *annišan=war=an* LUGAL-*eznanni kuit tittanut* 'why did you previously install him (i.e., Urhi-Tešup) in the kingship?' It thus becomes clear that 'kingship' and 'previously' are also resumed-mention topics, while Ishtar as the chief patron of Hattušili is the theme of the entire text, allowing her to be raised to topichood at virtually any time. While ostensibly the *kuit* clause merely introduces Ishtar's assurance of his accession to kingship, it is formulated to recall at whose expense his triumph comes and its having been repeatedly promised long before.

Lest this account of a contrastive focus plus three topicalizations seem strained, I offer the following incontrovertible example of triple topicalization:

(23) *KBo* 14.21 i 21–22 (Oracular inquiry; NH)

[AN]A ^{d}Pirwa	MUNUS.LUGAL=y[a]	ANA EZEN$_4$		MU.KAM
DN.DAT	DN.DAT=and	festival-DAT-LOC.SG		year-GEN.SG
1 GU$_4$	9 UDU.HI.A…	^{LÚ}SANGA	*IŠTU* É=*ŠU*	
1 cow-ACC.SG	9 sheep-ACC.PL	priest-NOM.SG	house=his-ABL	
peskezzi				
give-PRS3SG				

'(What if) to Pirwa and the Queen for the annual festival the priest gives from his house one cow, nine sheep … (further list of offerings)?'

One may question just how much saliency adheres to the second or third topic, but the cited example is one of five such sentences in the text, and the rationale seems clear enough: the deity or deities to be honored come first, second comes the particular festival in which the offerings are to be made, and finally comes the specifications of the offerings. These all may vary, while the provision that the priest supplies the offerings 'from his house' is a constant.[21]

9.5 Conclusion

I believe that the preceding analysis of instances of subordinating *kuit* 'because, since' appearing superficially late in the clause instead of in its typical clause-second position is viable. They result from cases where the clause subject is either

[21] We find another instance of three constituents topicalized to the left of the subject (*Bo* 86/299 iv 30–43; NH) in the so-called colophon of the text (a scribal addition indicating the topic or incipit of the text and sometimes the identity of the scribe who incised the text). Here also the hierarchical order makes good sense: first comes the direct object, the treaty tablet itself (its provisions), second the place where the text was at least ostensibly dictated and written down, third the long list of witnesses. Least salient is the subject, the name of the scribe who merely incised the text.

in contrastive focus or topicalized in combination with other topicalized constituents. I have, however, qualified it as provisional for good reason. Careful readers will have noticed my negative formulation of the basis for it: that I know of no facts precluding that subjects, as topics, may stand in a TopicP in the left periphery (perhaps even routinely). I cannot at present offer positive evidence for this premise. In the absence of such evidence and a rigorous formal syntactic analysis, this proposal is far from assured.

Furthermore, many syntacticians now posit both focus and topic positions at the left periphery of the vP.[22] Sideltsev and Molina (2015) analyze non-fronted examples of contrastive focus *=ma* as standing in preverbal focus. That may well be correct, but one must consider the possibility that such instances stand in the vP FocusP position.[23] Given our still limited understanding of the unmarked order of constituents within the predicate other than preverb and verb, the question of a vP topic position in Hittite must also remain open. I wish merely to indicate that my analysis regarding the subjects in the examples discussed could be correct, but the structural position of the putative second (and subsequent) topics could be in the vP. I hope that further research by others who control formal syntax and discourse analysis far better than me may be able to confirm, refute, or refine my tentative conclusions.

Acknowledgment

I am pleased and honored to contribute to this most merited tribute to Andrew Garrett, a friend of long standing whose impressive breadth of contributions to our field spans synchronic and diachronic phonetics, phonology, and syntax and language families from ancient Indo-European Anatolian to Uto-Aztecan. A formal syntactic account of my chosen topic is beyond my abilities, but I hope my survey of the facts will help guide others to a full solution.

[22] I am indebted to Joseph Eska for bringing this to my attention. See for ample references Eska (2016: 35 note 6).

[23] In their cited examples (2015: 237), the constituent marked with *=ma* definitely cannot be in FocusP of the left periphery, but its structural position within the predicate is harder to determine.