

A NOTE ON THE *-ō/-eu, *-ā/*-āi/-i STEMS IN INDO-EUROPEAN.

A PROPOS OF A PAPER BY PAUL BROSMAN

FRANCISCO R. ADRADOS

RR. AA. de la Lengua y de la Historia

Los temas griegos en *-ōs / -eu, -ēs / -eu, -ā / -ei* deben interpretarse como derivados de antiguos temas indoeuropeos en laríngeal.

Greek themes in *-ōs / -eu, -ēs / -eu, -ā / -ei* should be interpreted as derived from old IE laryngeal themes.

Palabras clave: hitita; griego; latín; laríngeales velares y palatales.

Keywords: Hittite; Greek; Latin; velar laryngeals; palatal laryngeals.

1. *Long Vowel Stems and Sonant + Vowel Stems.*

I refer to a paper published by Paul Brosman («The Greek Nouns in *-ōs* and *-eus*», *Folia Linguistica Historica* 15, 2004, pp. 1-19). Elaborating on previous ideas found in his and other scholars' publications¹, he comes to propose that in Indo-European there were stems in diphthongs (both in *-i* and *-u*) which he takes to be the direct forerunners of the Greek stems of the above mentioned type, as well as of Latin and Baltic stems in **-ē*, which alternate with *-i* and **-ā* stems in several languages.

It has indeed been remarked that alongside those stems in long vowel there are variants – obviously in the same vowel grade – in which sometimes an *-i* (in Hittite also *-*hi*) and sometimes an *-u* is added. They are either variants in full (F) grade (*-ei, -eu*) or in zero grade (*-i, -u*). From this fact the conclusion can be drawn that they have originated from forms in a diphthong. Forms with long vowels would thus come from forms in diphthongs (with a long vowel + *-i* or *-u*). These forms must then be related to others in zero grade which resulted in forms in *-i* and *-u* – these were generally classed as independent declensions which include variants with long vowels (*-ηι*, etc.)

¹ «The cognates of the Hittite *-ai-* and *-au-* stems», *IES* 12, 1984, pp. 345-365 and other studies.

Providing examples of each case would take up too many pages and the facts are well known. Limiting myself to the cases analysed in Brosman's last paper, I can cite a. o. the Latin variants *fidē / fidiē-*, the Greek words in **-os* (πάτρως, μήτρως, γάλως) and their parallel forms in *-u* (lat. *patruus*, as well as the long series of Greek nouns in *-εως*). To those one could add the Hittite forms in *-a* (only in N.-V.-Ac. n. plu.), but also in *-ai* and *-i*. A Nom. Sg. *-i* or *-i* also exists in other Indo-European languages – it is clearly a zero grade.

However, we are not dealing only with F grade forms in **-ā*, **-āi* (also Hitt. **-āhi*) vs. zero grade forms *-i* or F grade forms in **-ō*, *-eu* vs. zero grade forms in *-u* –. In Greek there are plenty of variants *-η / -εω*, whose distribution runs sometimes along dialectal lines while in other cases seems to be rather arbitrary (Πέρσης / Περσεύς).

On the other hand, it should be borne in mind that when inflected these root-stems do sometimes receive desinences, and that the root-stems are not necessarily N. sg., but can also be V., or N.-Ac.-V. plu. or D. sg. (in *-āi* or *-i* e. g.)².

This whole set of forms has been frequently explained, as stated above, as having originated from forms in long diphthongs in *-i* and *-u* which may have sometimes lost those sonants. And long diphthongs are sometimes replaced by diphthongs with a short vowel + *-i*, *-u*. As I have explained, they are both variants of the F grade. And next to them we find zero grades with *-i* or *-u*.

Brosman had been preceded by the scholars he mentions who had similar views. But there are still some unresolved questions concerning the vowel colours and the forms with a difference in phonetics like **-ā / *-āi*, **-ē / -eu* or **-ō / -eu* a.o. In other words, the phonetic problems remain open.

² Cf. «On the Origins of the Indoeuropean Dative-Locative singular endings», in Jazayery and Winter (eds.), *Languages and Cultures. Studies in honor of E. C. Polomé*, Berlin 1988, pp. 21-41 (Spanish transl. in *Estudios de Lingüística Indoeuropea*, Madrid, C.S.I.C., 1988, pp. 317-327). Also «Archaisms in Anatolian nominal inflexion», in Arbeitman and Bombard (eds.), *Boni homini donum. Studies in historical Linguistics in memory of J. Alexander Kerns*, Amsterdam 1981, pp. 13-40 (span. trans. ob. cit., pp. 263-282); and «La flexion nominale du grec et de l'Indoeuropéen III à la lumière de l'Anatolien», in *Emile Benveniste aujourd'hui*, Paris, 1984, pp. 1-16 (Spanish transl., op. cit., pp. 283-289).

I should like to remind now that for many years I have been publishing books and papers – ignored by Brosman – in which I have tried to solve those problems. In my view, the original stems were laryngeal ones.

2. Why laryngeal stems? What kind of laryngeals?

First, it is important to remind the contribution of Hittite, and Anatolian in general, to this question³. Besides *-a* < *-ah*, *-ahi* may also appear. This is the case of Luvian abstracts and collectives in *-ahi(t)* and the Lycian D.-L. sg. *-ahi*. The *-i* forms must be explained as derived from *-hi*⁴.

The existence within the declension of old **-ā* stems of alternating forms with **-āi* and sometimes with the zero grade *-i*, *-iy* moves us to identify that laryngeal with a laryngeal with a palatal appendix, that is, **H^y*.

I think that this is the only way to explain such an inflection as that of Hitt. *zahhais* / *zahhiyas*. In other languages there is also **-ei*. I have explained the duality of **-ā*, **-āi* / *-ei* in the F grade as due to two variants of syllabification – in the first term, **-ā* and **-āi* are the variants before consonant and before vowel, with secondary extensions. The *-i* declension has evolved from the zero grade, while the F grade outcomes tend to develop into forms in *-ei* (Gk. *πόλι* / *πόλει*).

To sum up, the inextricable mixture of F grades in **-ā* and **-āi*, *-ei* next to zero grade forms in *-i* can only be accounted for as due to phonetic evolutions in which a **H₁^y* laryngeal is involved. The alternance **-ē* / *-i* is due to the presence of the **H₂^y* laryngeal, instead.

The data are easy to gather and they have been collected several times, but the various F grade forms in **-ā*, **-āi*, *-ei* and the zero grade form in *-i* can only be explained in phonetic terms. In this note I can only sketch this idea,

³ Cf. *Estudios sobre las sonantes y laringales indoeuropeas*, 2nd ed., Madrid, C.S.I.C., 1973, p. 139 ss.; «Further considerations on the phonetics and morphologizations of **H^y* and **H^w*», EMERITA 49, 1981, pp. 131-171 (Spanish transl., op. cit. pp. 121-157).

⁴ On the alternance **h* / **hh* see «Further considerations ...» cit., p. 237 ss. The laryngeal which was disappearing in Indo-European in general, was disappearing also in Hittite, but occasionally it was reinforced instead.

which has been further developed in my former studies.

The same thing applies to the alternance of F grades in $*-\bar{e}$, $*-eu$ / zero grades in $-u$ which I mentioned above, and also to the alternance $*-\bar{o}$, $-eu$ / $-u$, which is precisely the subject of Brosman's paper. In the first case, it is the $*H$ laryngeal that is involved, while it is the $*H$ laryngeal that plays a role in the second. No new phonetic explanation has been proposed and I think that my own explanations are still valid.

There were indeed secondary developments which led to the creation of several declensional types: in $*-\bar{a}$, $-i$; in $*-\bar{o}$, $-u$. Those declensions are obviously secondary and next to the forms with a long vowel we find forms with $-i$ or $-u$. No other explanation has been proposed, as I can say.

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