Luwian ‘Indeterminate’ Relative Clauses and their Prehistory

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It has been the communis opinio since the pioneering work of Held (1957) that Hittite has two distinct types of preposed relative clauses (RCs) which stand in complementary distribution, viz. ‘indeterminate’ RCs, where the wh-word is clause-initial (ignoring clausal conjunction and attached clitics) and refers to an entity that is indefinite and non-specific, and ‘determinate’ RCs, where the wh-word is non-initial, and refers to an entity that is definite and specific (cf. Garrett 1994:44)). This ‘indeterminate’ vs. ‘determinate’ contrast was subsequently established for Lycian by Gusmani (1962, 1975) and, on the basis of agreement between Hittite and Lycian, reconstructed for Proto-Anatolian (PA) by Garrett (1994:49). Unsurprisingly, then, it is generally assumed that the same contrast also obtains in Luwian (cf. Melchert 2003:207).

I present new evidence from Hieroglyphic Luwian that complicates the Anatolian situation. Specifically, a comprehensive survey of Hieroglyphic Luwian ‘indeterminate’ RCs shows the systematic absence of a correlation between initial wh-word and ‘indeterminate’ semantics (pace Melchert 2003:207); rather, the most frequent surface pattern is exemplified in (1), where a single constituent precedes the relative pronoun:

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\begin{align*}
za-ya=pa=wa/i=ta & \quad \text{DOMUS-na} \quad \text{REL-sa} \quad a-mi-i \quad | \quad \text{INFANS-ni-i} \\
\text{INFANS.NEPOS-si} & \quad \text{INFANS.NEPOS.REL-la} \quad | \quad \text{ARHA} \\
\text{grandson-DAT.s.c.} & \quad \text{great-grandson-DAT.s.c.} \quad \text{away-PRV.} \quad \text{take-3S.PRES.ACT.} \\
(a)=wa/i=tu-u & \quad \text{“CAELUM”} \quad (DEUS)\text{TONITRUS-hu-za-sa} \quad | \quad (DEUS)\text{kar-hu-ha-sa} \\
\text{CONJ=} & \quad \text{PTC-QUOT=CL-3S.DAT.} \quad \text{sky-GEN.s.N.} \quad \text{Tarhunt-NOM.s.c.} \quad \text{Karhuha-PN-NOM.s.c.} \\
\text{(DEUS)ku-AVIS-pa-pa-sa=ha} & \quad (DEUS)\text{LUNA+MI-sa} \quad | \quad (DEUS)\text{SOL-sa=} \quad [ha-] \\
\text{Kubaba-PN-NOM.s.c.=} & \quad \text{Moon-PN-NOM.s.c.} \quad \text{(god) Sun-PN-NOM.s.c.=} \quad \text{and-CONJ} \quad \text{and-CONJ} \\
\text{(DEUS)pa+ra/i-[k]}+ra/i-sa=ha- & \quad | \quad \text{LIS-la/i/u-sa-tu} \\
\text{Parkara-PN-NOM.s.c.=} & \quad \text{litigate-3PL.IMPV.ACT.} \\
\end{align*}
\]

‘But whoever shall take away these houses from my son, grandson, (or) great-grandson, against him may Tarhunt of the Sky, Karhuha, and Kubaba, (as well as) the Moon-god and the Sun-god and Parkara litigate [and may they destroy his head!]’

(KARKAMIŠ A4a §12-13; CHLI, ed. Hawkins)

Having assessed the Luwian evidence, I evaluate its implications for PA. Rather than positing a diachronic innovation in Luwian, I argue that the syntactic patterns there observed can be reconciled with previously neglected evidence in Hittite and Lycian, allowing for a uniform description of ‘indeterminate’ RCs in PA that diverges from Garrett’s (1994) reconstruction. Building on the earlier proposals of Garrett (1994), Samuels (2005), and Huggard (2011), a new analysis of ‘indeterminate’ RCs in Luwian and PA is developed.
References


