THE CASE SYSTEM
OF WEST-SEMITIZED AMARNA AKKADIAN

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In describing Amarna Akkadian, most authors have laid emphasis on the analysis of the verbal system. This is not at all surprising because the system is totally different from the one we find in standard Akkadian and clearly reflects the West-Semitic system. As short final vowels are preserved in Amarna Akkadian, and so the original tense-aspect distinctions, the language is of vital importance in the reconstruction of Proto-West-Semitic.

It is remarkable that hardly any work has been done on the case system. Apart from a few brief observations by Böhl and Dhorme and a few loose remarks in articles primarily dealing with other subjects, philological or linguistic or describing the entire grammar of one subcorpus, no endeavour has, as far as I am aware, been made to analyse the case system.

This is regrettable because from what we know of the verbal system we may assume that in Amarna Akkadian the case system too reflects West-Semitic usage to some extent. In Proto-West-Semitic, case was expressed mainly by short final vowels. Together with Ugaritic, Amarna Akkadian seems to show the most ancient West-Semitic case system attested. The Amarna Akkadian evidence is far more varied and philologically far less complicated than the Ugaritic evidence, where we must inevitably confine ourselves to III'-nouns.

1) I am indebted to Dr W H van Soldt and to Professor Dr F H H Kortlandt for reading and commenting on an earlier version of this article and to Dr G L van Driem for correcting the English. Of course, all responsibility for errors or flaws in the argument remain my own. The texts editions used are J A Knudtzon, Die El-Amarna Tafeln (Leipzig 1915) and A F Ramey, "El Amarna Tablets 359-379" (AOAT 8, 2nd ed, Kevelaer/Neukirchen-Valyn 1978). The letters published in these two studies will be referred to simply by their numbers. Ample use was made of W L Moran, Les lettres d'El Amarna (LAPO 13, Paris 1987)

2) E g F M Th Böhl, Die Sprache der Amarnabriefe (Leipzig 1909), § 22, E Dhorme, "La Langue de Canaan", in Recueil Edouard Dhorme (Paris 1951), 456ff (reprint from Revue Biblique 1913/14)

3) E g W F Albright and W L Moran, "A re-interpretation of an Amarna Letter from Byblos (EA 82)", JCS 2, 239-248

In this article I shall examine the following points:

1) The morphology of the case system. Though it does not differ very much from the system of Akkadian, Ugaritic or Arabic, the Amarna Akkadian case system has its own interesting and problematical points and therefore deserves a thorough examination.

2) Confusion of cases. Attention will be drawn to the fact that in at least one town two cases are systematically confused, heralding the first stage of the disintegration of the case system.

3) The use of the different cases.

1. THE MORPHOLOGY OF THE CASE SYSTEM

In dealing with the nominal morphology, I have assumed a three-case system, in which the cases have the following functions:

— NOMINATIVE subject of a verbal sentence
  subject or predicate of a non-verbal sentence

— ACCUSATIVE direct object

— GENITIVE element after a preposition
  *nomen rectum* in a genitival phrase.

These are not the only functions these cases can assume, but they are the most obvious ones; since I intended to avoid circular argumentation, I have not taken into account adverbial use of cases (accusative of time, etc.) or special problems, such as the case after *jamu* “there is not” and the pendent case. I will consider these points in the third section of the article.

Amarna Akkadian also used a locative case. As its morphology has already been examined by other authors, I will leave this point out of consideration.

It is necessary to distinguish between three “states”: the *status rectus*, the *status constructus* and the *status pronominalis*. This last status is the status of a noun to

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1) In order to keep the geographical distribution of the different grammatical features clear, I did not take into consideration every letter available. The corpora I studied are Iqata (100), Byblos (68-95, 101-134, 139-140, 362), Beirut-1 (the letters sent by Rib-Addi of Byblos during his exile in Beirut 136-138), Beirut-2 (the Ammunra letters 141-143), Sidon (144-145), Tyre (146-155, 295), Amqi (174-177, 185-187, 363), Qadesh, Ruhaza and Lapana (189, 191-193 hence Qadesh), Kumdi (including the Birjawai letters, 194-198 and 201-206 cf Moran 1987, 433, n 2), Hasor (227-228), Acre (232-235, 327), Megiddo (242-248, 365), Shechem (252-254), Pihili (255-256), Gunet-Kirmiti (the Tagi-letters, 264-266), Gezer (267-271, 292-294, 297-300, 378 and 278-280, cf Moran 1987, 500, n 1), Qiltu (the Shuwardata letters 281-294, 297-300, 378 and the Abd-Alshartu letters 63-65, 335), Jerusalem (285-290), Ashqelon (320-326), Lakhish (328-332).

The only large west-semitized corpus not included is Amurru. It was left out of consideration because of a number of philological problems. For example, at least one letter from Amurru is clearly influenced by Hurrian. Furthermore, there is great discrepancy between the grammar of the Abd-Alshartu letters and that of the Aziru letters. The corpus was already thoroughly examined by Sh Izre’el (cf note 4).

2) E g Dhorme 1951, 458, Izre’el, *IOS* 8, 48.
which a pronominal suffix is attached. In view of its marginal character I will devote no attention to the *status absolutus* (in the Assyriological sense of the word).

11 *Status rectus*

The system in the Status Rectus is, as one might expect from other Semitic languages, as follows

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Case</th>
<th>Sing.</th>
<th>Pl.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NOM</td>
<td>-u</td>
<td>-u'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACC</td>
<td>-a</td>
<td>-i'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GEN</td>
<td>-t</td>
<td>-t</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

12 *Status constructus*

By *status constructus* I mean only those constructus forms which are without a pronominal suffix. In the singular, the difference between the cases is not expressed. In the nominative, accusative and genitive singular we find forms without any ending or with -t. Their distribution is partly predictable from the structure of the noun stem, partly arbitrary or lexically determined.

— Stems ending in a geminate have the ending -t. Only the word *mmmu* often has forms without an ending (*mmmu* 5 ×, *mm* 3 ×). Another exception is *gab* in 74/19 and 129/17.

— Monosyllabic stems of the structure CV(C-) have -t. However, with the word *qatu* we usually find no ending. In letters from Byblos, Sidon, Qadesh, Gunti-Kirmil (the Tagu-letters) and Gezer we find *qat*, while the two instances of *qat* come from Tyre and Jerusalem. The construct state of *šumu* is *šum* (2 ×). Other instances of -t instead of -t are 119/45 *di-en* and 151/42 *ta-an*.

— Stems ending in a consonant cluster containing the feminine desinence -t always have -t.

These rules are broadly the same as those for the occurrence of the epenthetic vowel -t found in Mesopotamian Akkadian.

We may now turn to the words not covered by these rules. In some Phoenician towns we find no ending (Byblos -t 4 ×, -ø 60 ×, Sidon -t 1 ×, -ø 5 ×). In other towns, the majority of forms have an epenthetic vowel (Tyre -t 19 ×, -ø 8 ×). In Syria, there is a slight preference for forms with -t, whereas in Palestine these forms appear only in one third of all cases.

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7) Generally vowel length is not represented in orthography.
8) The use of e- and i-signs is partly conditioned by grammar, partly a mere orthographical feature. As the corpora may be quite different from one another with respect to orthography and as an orthographical study falls outside the scope of the present investigation, I have chosen not to distinguish between /e/ and /i/ in the grammatical sketch. However, in the transcriptions the two vowels will be distinguished from one another.
10) As *ana mahār* is probably a compound preposition I left it out of the discussion.
Inside this group of nouns we do not find any formal difference between the cases so that we can safely regard -t as an epenthetic vowel

It may be useful to consider in some detail the complementation of infinitives Generally a construction like “the walking of Peter” or “the slapping of Peter” is formed by putting the infinitive in the construct state and the nomen rectum in the genitive Yet sometimes we find a construction with the infinitive in the status rectus and the nomen rectum in the accusative, e.g.

151/18 a-na da-ga-li pa-nu-šu sīg₅-[t]a (from Tyre), “in order to see his good face”

287/58 la-a a-la-ah-e mu-še-ra KASKAL (Jerusalem), “I could not send a caravan”

Outside Jerusalem and Tyre this construction is very rare In Byblos, for example, an accusative complement can only be used with an infinitive if the infinitive is the direct object of the verbs leʾu or buʾu In that case, we find either a construct state + genitive or a fronted complement of the infinitive, e.g.

81/10 u 2 URU j[u-ba-]u [la-q]a-a, “And he wants to take the two towns”

In these cases, the complement of the infinitive may have become a second object of the finite verb, cf.

129/19 u ti-ba-u-na-ša la-q[a-a], “And they want to take them”

Here -ša, logically the complement of leqū, has been attached to buʾu as an object suffix.

Except for instances from Tyre and Jerusalem, I have in principle analysed every infinitive followed directly by its complement as a construct state It is quite probable that this analysis is incorrect in a few individual cases However, the general picture of the morphology of the construct state does not change if infinitives are left out.

There are a few singular forms of the status constructus where we find case-marking:

NOM a-wa-tu (136/22), še-hu (147/26), ma-sar-tum (289/36 from a sentence with jani)

ACC [t-p]a-ša (79/24, from an infinitive construction), [ha-za-a]n-na (131/19), a-wa-tam (94/5, 323/19, 324/10)

The ending -a is found three times where we should expect a genitive ba-la-ta (74/17 an infinitive construction), a-wa-tam (94/7), [a] t-[l]a-ta (114/60) and once instead of a nominative gab-ba (378/21)

Against a total of 192 construct state forms these forms are negligible

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11) In Amqi there may be case marking in this group of nouns ACC sg o 3 x 1 l x and GEN sg o 3 x 1 7 x

12) Perhaps these forms should be read as a broken spelling a wa ut
In the plural of the construct state, the following case marking is found:

- **NOM** -u (also -i³)
- **ACC** -i
- **GEN** -i

Unfortunately, examples of the nominative plural are quite rare. I will give all available examples:

- **-u** a-ta-bu (114/47), pa-ru (117/12, panu is generally a plural noun), na-ak-ru (191/17, cf. the discussion below)
- **-i** lu meš be-li (102/22), mar-ši-te meš (137/74) In the light of standard Akkadian, the last plural form is remarkable. One would expect maršātu

In the accusative and in the genitive, one always finds -i. The only exception is 192/10 a-wa-at meš

The question now is: What was the situation in the substrate-language of Amarna Akkadian? Must we attribute the absence of case vowels in the singular to influence from Mesopotamian Akkadian, where we find approximately the same situation as in Amarna, or should we suppose that in contemporary Canaanite case distinctions had already disappeared in this position? The influence of Canaanite on the Amarna Akkadian verbal system is so overwhelming that it would be most unlikely that no influence was exerted on the case system. The case system of West-Semitic is much more similar to that of Akkadian than the verbal system. It must therefore have been much easier to put the two case systems on a par, which in Amarna automatically meant the use of the West-Semitic system. We can compare this situation with what happened in the Akkadian of Ugarit. Ugaritic had case vowels in the construct state.¹³) Though the influence of Ugaritic on the Akkadian written in Ugarit was not as profound as the influence of Canaanite on Amarna Akkadian, half of the construct state forms follow the Ugaritic pattern.¹⁴) If one assumes that in proto-Northwest-Semitic there was a case distinction in the singular of the construct state, as is suggested by the facts from Ugarit, the Amarna state of affairs would represent the first stage in the disintegration of the case system. Perhaps the use of -i in the nominative plural also corroborates this, though here the evidence is too meagre for definite conclusions. We might conclude that the construct state paradigm was developing into a system with only an opposition between singular (-ø or -i) and plural (always -i).

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13 Status pronominals
In the pronominal state, I shall mark the difference between the forms before a first person singular suffix and those before other suffixes.

13.1 The pronominal state before the 1 sg suffix
In Mesopotamian Akkadian, we find the following system:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Case</th>
<th>Sg Nom</th>
<th>Pl</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NOM</td>
<td>-Ə + ī</td>
<td>-ū + ja</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACC</td>
<td>-Ə + ī</td>
<td>-ī + ja</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GEN</td>
<td>-ī + ja</td>
<td>-ī + ja</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The picture in Amarna is entirely different. In the nominative, the ending -Ə + ī is quite rare. In fact, the only word for which it is regularly attested is bēlu. Next to the form bēlī we also find forms of the type bēlya/EN-ua. The choice between these two possibilities depends on the writer: bēlī is found in six corpora.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Corpus</th>
<th>bēlī</th>
<th>bēlya</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Byblos</td>
<td>33 x</td>
<td>10 x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beirut</td>
<td>12 x</td>
<td>3 x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tyre</td>
<td>4 x</td>
<td>15 x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kumidi</td>
<td>1 x</td>
<td>3 x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gezer</td>
<td>12 x</td>
<td>17 x</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In Gezer, the situation is very interesting. In the Milkili letters, we find a strong preference for bēlī (9 x, only twice EN-ua). In the other letters, we only find EN-ua (14 x). The same situation obtains in the letters of Shuwardata. Those letters which, according to Moran, are orthographically indistinguishable from the Milkili letters from Gezer and which Moran suggests were written by the same writer as the Milkili letters, give us three instances of bēlī and one of EN-ua. As I explained in note 5, I have in principle included the Shuwardata letters just mentioned in the Gezer corpus. In the other Shuwardata letters, we do not find bēlī at all, whereas EN-ua occurs 20 times.

If we leave bēlī out of consideration, there are only three instances of -ī in the nominative singular: LU-li (138/81), e-mu-qi (154/7), ša-bī (362/6).

In the accusative singular, the ending -ī is even rarer than in the nominative, undoubtedly due to the fact that the word bēlu is more frequent in the nominative than in the accusative. Only in the corpora Beirut-1 and Shechem these forms are found. The following are all the relevant forms from these two corpora:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Beirut-1</th>
<th>NOM sg</th>
<th>NOM sg</th>
<th>ACC sg</th>
<th>ACC sg</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-ī bēlī (12 x), LU-li (1 x)</td>
<td>-īa EN-ua (3 x), šēš-ua (3 x), DAM-ua (1 x), E-ia (1 x)</td>
<td>-ī hiti (1 x), beli (1 x), erēbi (1 x), awati (1 x)</td>
<td>-īa DUMU-ua (1 x)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

¹³ Cf. Bohl 1909 § 15a
¹⁶ Moran 1987, 500 n 1
Shechem  NOM sg = -i  not attested
      NOM sg = -(i)ja  armiya (2 x), hitija (1 x)
      NOM sg = -ija  arnia (1 x), hitija (1 x)
      ACC sg = -i  ut (2 x)
      ACC sg = -ya  karsija (2 x), arniya (1 x), mimniya (1 x)

Beirut-1 seems to be the only corpus where the suffix -i is still regularly used.
Looking at the rest of the Amarna letters, the following picture emerges

      NOM sg = 52 x i, 139 x -ia
      ACC sg = 2 x i, 28 x -ia

The next question is Which vowel was used between the stem and -ia? Though
the suffix is very often found with ideograms which do not give any indication of
the vowel between the stem and the suffix (e.g. *i-ia, *a-ia*), there are sufficient other
examples to conclude that the vowel between the stem and the suffix was -i- for all
cases. We find this vowel 35 x in the nominative and 18 x in the accusative. Only
four times, a different vowel appears

      NOM sg = -uya  ar-mu-ia (253/18), hit-tu'-ia (253/19)
      ACC sg = -uja  pa-ar-sa-ia (73/39), pa'-na-ia (281/20)

It is not entirely clear how we should analyse the accusative form la-qa-ia, which
appears several times in Byblos. One might assume laqa'-a+ia > laqaja or
laqa'-i+ia > laqaja, or some similar analysis.

As there is no parallel with standard Akkadian here, I think one can safely
suppose that forms with -ja in the nominative and accusative singular reflect the
situation in Canaanite. This would be more or less parallel to the situation in
Ugaritic, where in poetical texts we find no ending written in the nominative, the
ending probably being -i, while in prose texts one finds, -y, which must represent
-(V)ja). In the Akkadian of Ugaritic, which is primarily represented by prose texts,
jya/ is used. This is an indication that in Ugaritic acid Canaanite the genitive
suffix *-ja was generalised to all cases in the S2ngular. In later forms of Canaanite,
such as Hebrew and Later Phoenician, this form -ja again became -i because of the
general dropping of final short vowels.

We are now left with the following problem. In Old Phoenician and in the older
Phoenician inscriptions from Byblos, texts dating from centuries after the Amarna
period, we find a distinction between -i (not written) in the nom/acc sg and -ja
(orthographically -y) in the genitive. Maybe this can be explained by assuming
dialectal variation. If this is correct, all dialects would have replaced -i by -ja,

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17) Van Soldt 1986 409 18) Cf. the discussion in van Soldt 1986, 407ff
except some dialects in Northern Syria, whence all old Phoenician inscriptions come. However, the question remains what to do about the Phoenician forms from Byblos? Here we should keep in mind that in one Amarna corpus, Beirut-1, the opposition -i vs -ya is still operative. Beirut-1 is the corpus of letters sent by Rib-Addi, prince of Byblos during his exile in Beirut. He had gone to Beirut to conclude a treaty with the local prince (cf. 138/51ff), but when he returned home, the gates of his own city remained closed to him, and he had to return to his ally. It is conceivable that Rib-Addi had taken a writer with him to write up the treaty. In that case, Beirut-1 would be a subcorpus of the Byblos-letters. Orthographically and linguistically, the Beirut-1 corpus is different from the other letters from Byblos, but even more so from the Ammumra-letters from Beirut (Beirut-2). If it indeed reflects the dialect of Byblos, we must assume that there were two subdialects in this city, one using only -ya, represented by the Amarna letters from Byblos, the other using -i as opposed to -ya, as found in Beirut-1 and the old Phoenician inscriptions from Byblos.

The dual of the nominative is found in a gloss from Sidon.

144/17 //hi-na-ia “my two eyes”

In the plural, a vowel always appears between the stem and -ia. In the accusative and genitive, this vowel is -i-, in the nominative usually -u- (8 x). In the nominative -ya is attested five times. Three of these forms appear in the phrase LU MAŠ hupšija. Moran considers hupšija “an abstract standing in a genitival relation after LU MAŠ, which accordingly is not a determinative.”20) This analysis is corroborated by the two nominative status rectus forms LU MAŠ hu-up-ši (118/37, 125/27). In this light, LU MAŠ hu-<up>-šu-šu-nu (125/34) is odd. The two other nominative plural forms with -ya are a-wa-te-ia (117/32) and LU MAŠ a-bu-ti-ia (130/21).

13.2 The status pronominalis before other suffixes

Before other suffixes we find the following pattern in Amarna Akkadian:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>sg</th>
<th>NOM -o + suffix/-u + suffix</th>
<th>pl</th>
<th>-u + suffix</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ACC</td>
<td>-o + suffix/-a + suffix</td>
<td>-i+ suffix</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GEN</td>
<td>-i + suffix</td>
<td>-i + suffix</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is clear that this system is entirely different in the singular from the system before the 1 sg suffix, where case distinction is very unusual.

Before other suffixes we find either a ditotic declension (nom/acc vs gen) in the singular, or a triptotic declension. In the Akkadian from Mesopotamia triptotism is very rare in this position, but in Ugaritic it is the rule.

The distribution of the two declensional patterns can largely be predicted on the base of the phonological structure of the stem.

20) Cf. W.L. Moran The Use of the Canaanite Infinitive Absolute JCS 4 169 172 esp. 169 n 8
— If a stem ends in a geminate, there is a case vowel in the nominative and accusative (9×, only exception gab-ša in 286/36)
— Monosyllabic stems of the structure CVC often lack a case vowel in the nominative and accusative (5× against 2)
— Stems ending in -VC generally lack a case vowel in the nominative and accusative This situation obtains 17×. The exceptions are [b]e"-la-ku-nu (74/26), uru-hu-ki-ši-na (137/73), //ru-šu-nu (264/18: a gloss)
— Other stems often lack a case vowel (10× against 5)

Instead of the expected -u-, which occurs 11×, or -a-, which occurs 13×, we sometimes find the vowel -i- in the nominative or in the accusative

NOM sg  a-wa Marvin-šu-nu (89/14), gab-bi-šu-nu (362/68), ir-pi-šu (289/38, this is the Egyptian word iry'pt21) As in this period final /t/ often disappears in Egyptian22, the vowel -i- might be explained as deriving from the Egyptian stem

ACC sg qa-ru-hu (284/19)

In conclusion, we find the following case system in Amarna Akkadian

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>St Rectus</th>
<th>St Constr</th>
<th>St Pron 1 sg</th>
<th>St Pron other suff</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>sg NOM</td>
<td>-u</td>
<td>-a/-i*</td>
<td>-ja/-a/-u/-i*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACC</td>
<td>-a</td>
<td>-a/-i*</td>
<td>-ja/-a/-u/-i*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GEN</td>
<td>-i</td>
<td>-a/-i*</td>
<td>-ja/-a/-u/-i*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pl NOM</td>
<td>-u</td>
<td>-u/-i?</td>
<td>-ja</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACC</td>
<td>-i</td>
<td>-i</td>
<td>-ja</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GEN</td>
<td>-i</td>
<td>-i</td>
<td>-ja</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* in part phonologically determined distribution

1.4 Some special cases

It is necessary to deal with a number of words and groups of words separately. I shall discuss the following cases

1.4.1 toponyms and proper names
1.4.2 plurals with ending in -iitu
1.4.3 the word panu “face”
1.4.4 the word annu “this”
1.4.5 the word pitatu “archer host”
1.4.6 the words ajab “sea” and tamhar “battle” in Byblos

1.4.1 Toponyms and proper names

In Amarna Akkadian, there is no indication that toponyms are declined. There are place names in -u (e.g. Usu), -a (e.g. Irqaṭa), -i (e.g. Ambi) and place names without any ending (e.g. Urusalim). The endings -a and -i constitute the vast...
majority For certain toponyms more than one ending is attested (often -a alongside -o, or -a alongside -i), but these endings are never related to case differences, as is shown quite clearly by the toponym Symira

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Sumur</th>
<th>Sumura</th>
<th>Sumuri</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NOM</td>
<td>4 x</td>
<td>8 x</td>
<td>1 x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACC</td>
<td>1 x  ?</td>
<td>10 x</td>
<td>3 x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GEN</td>
<td>4 x</td>
<td>34 x</td>
<td>2 x</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Unlike the situation in Ugarit, there is no indication that proper names were declined diptotically in Amarna. Of course, one finds toponyms which are only attested in genitive and accusative contexts, but it would be a totally *ad hoc* analysis to consider these as cases of diptotic declension.

For personal names, as opposed to toponyms, the picture is slightly more complicated. Foreign names are treated like toponyms, viz there is no case marking, although variation in the final vowel is possible (e.g. Amanappa alongside Amanappi). The name Šuwardata might prove to be an exception. Here we find two genitive forms with -a and a single instance of Šuwardatu in the nominative.

Personal names consisting of a genitive construction (like "the servant of Ashirta") are generally not susceptible to case differentiation. Consider for example the prince of Amurrū

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Abdi-Āšīrtə</th>
<th>A-Āšīrtu</th>
<th>A-Āšratu</th>
<th>A-Āšratu</th>
<th>A-Āšratu</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NOM</td>
<td>9 x</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>4 x</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>3 x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACC</td>
<td>6 x</td>
<td>1 x  ?</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>1 x</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GEN</td>
<td>30 x</td>
<td>9 x</td>
<td>1 x  ?</td>
<td>1 x</td>
<td>5 x</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

We sometimes find case marking in this class of names. This seems to be limited to an opposition of -u, used only in the nominative, as opposed to -i/-a, used in all cases including the nominative. Instances of this nominative in -u are the forms Abdi-Āšratu and Milkišu, the last of which occurs once in the nominative alongside the usual Milkiš in all cases. However, these are exceptions.

In other names, that is, West-Semitic names not consisting of a genitive construction, we usually find case inflection. For example, in the letters from Byblos and Beirut-1, the form Aziru occurs 16 x in the nominative and the form Aziru 12 x in the genitive without any overlap between the two. Yet in Tyre we find the form Azira twice in the nominative and three times in the genitive. Aziru occurs but once, in an accusative context. Even inside this group there is apparently variation between case-marked and undeclined forms. With those few declined names for

---


which we have sufficient information to reconstruct a complete paradigm triptotical declension appears, e.g.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Janhamu</th>
<th>Janhama</th>
<th>Janhami</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NOM</td>
<td>7×</td>
<td>1×</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACC</td>
<td>1× 9</td>
<td>4×</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GEN</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1.4.2 Plurals ending in -ütu

In Mesopotamia, plurals ending in -ütu, a desinence used there with adjectives and a few substantives, are diptotes, just like the other plurals. In Amarna Akkadian, these plurals are triptotically declined, as is shown by forms like ša-ru-ta (103/31) and LU MEŠ ha-za-nu-ta MEŠ (365/16). As against 15 accusatives with -ütu, we find only one instance of -ütu, [ha-zê]-a-nu-ti (285/19).

Quite interesting is the behaviour of these plurals in the construct and pronominal states. If we leave out of consideration the word abbütu, “fathers”, which always maintains the element -üt-, one regularly finds that -üt- is dropped in the construct state and that the remainder of the word is declined diptotically. In the pronominal state, the same rule applies without any exception whatsoever. I give all examples and counter examples.

st c NOM LU MEŠ be-li (102/22), na-ak-ru (191/17, in view of the context I prefer a translation “enemies” above Moran’s “war”)

st c ACC LU ša-rî MEŠ (185/56)

st c GEN [MEŠ ha-za-ni (129/11)
LU MEŠ ha-za-na in 138/26 is probably a singular form. If this is correct, MEŠ is a “logogram marker” here rather than a plural marker. LU MEŠ ha-za-nu-ti is found twice in the genitive of the construct state (107/24, 117/37)

st pr NOM LU MEŠ ha-za-nu-su (114/48), LU MEŠ ra-i-mu-ia (137/47 if this is a plural ending in -ütu in the status rectus)

st pr ACC ha-za-ni-su (116/63)

st pr GEN LU MEŠ ha-za-ni-ku-nu (117/62), LU MEŠ ha-za-ni-ka (132/50)

Van Soldt explains similar phenomena in the Akkadian of Ugant as a reinterpretation of the opposition -ütu vs -ā in Akkadian. In Mesopotamia, this opposition is used to distinguish adjectives from substantives. Yet, in the periphery, writers used the opposition to match the opposition status rectus vs status constructus, -ūma vs -ā, in their own language.

25) Cf. GAG § 63i
26) Moran 1987 430
27) Van Soldt 1986 428vv
28) Cf. van Soldt 1986 427 428
1.4.3. The word panu “face”

In principle, panu is used in Amarna as a plurale tantum, comparable to the Hebrew panim. The behaviour of panu in the pronominal state gives good evidence for this. Before the 1 sg. suffix we always find -u in the nominative, which would be surprising if panu were a singular. In the accusative before other suffixes we always find -i (15 x). If panu is modified by an adjective, this adjective is always plural, e.g.:

244/39 pa-ni-ma ša-nu-ta-m, 253/27 pa-ni ša-nu-tam.

Panu is used twice as a singular:

151/42 IGI-' (st. c. Gen), 281/20 p[a]-na-ia (Acc).

1.4.4. The word annu “this”

As other authors have observed, annu is used for all cases in Byblos, e.g.:

117/52 LÚ an-nu-ū (ACC), 76/46 ši- ip-ri an-nu-ū (Gen).

In most other towns, annu is inflected as a regular noun, e.g.:

196/32 ep-<ša> an-na (ACC), 196/40 ep-ši an-ni (Gen).

The feminine form annitu and the plural annutu are declined in the normal way.

1.4.5. The word ERIN.MEŠ pīṭatu, “archers”

The Egyptian word pdty has been treated differently by the different writers:

1) pīṭatu is indeclinable

a) By analogy with foreign proper names pīṭatu cannot be declined. This situation is found in the Ammunira letters from Beirut:

- st. r. Gen ERIN.HI A pī-tā-at (141/22; 141/30)
- st. c. Gen ERIN.MEŠ pī-tā-at (142/30)
- st. c. Gen ERIN.MEŠ pī-tā-ti (142/14).

b) Pīṭatu is the nomen rectum of ERIN.MEŠ, and therefore always appears in the genitive case. This pattern is found in most letters from Byblos. This analysis is corroborated by the fact that the gender of an adjective modifying ERIN.MEŠ pīṭati is always masculine in these letters. This means it agrees with the masculine word ERIN.MEŠ (šābu) rather than with the feminine word pīṭatu, e.g.:

ACC ERIN.MEŠ pī-tā-ti ra-ba (76/38).

2) pīṭatu is declinable

a) Pīṭatu is interpreted as a feminine singular and is therefore a triptote. This pattern can be found in some Byblos letters (93; 127-132 and 362), e.g.:

ACC ERIN.MEŠ pī-tā-tam (EA 131/33).

If there is a modifying adjective, this agrees with *pitatu* and is therefore feminine, e.g.

\[
\text{GEN [ERIN] ME§ pt-ta-ti ra-bi-ti (127/39)}
\]

Triptotic declension is also found in Beirut-1, Amqi, Gezer and the Shuwardata letters

b) *Pitatu* is regarded as a plural and is therefore a diptote. The clearest examples of this are found in Jerusalem

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{NOM ERIN ME§ pi-ta-tum (287/21)} \\
\text{ACC ERIN ME§ pt-ta-ti (287/18, 290/20)} \\
\text{GEN ERIN ME§ pt-ta-ti (287/17)}
\end{align*}
\]

There is some evidence that *pitatu* was analysed similarly in Amqi, Kumdi and in the Shuwardata letters

There is evidently a lot of variation, not only between the different corpora but also within some single corpora (Byblos, Amqi)

1 4 6 *The words ajab, “sea”, and tamhar, “battle”, in Byblos*

The words *ajab* and *tamhar* appear in Byblos in two forms

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{GEN = tamhara or tamhar} \\
\text{GEN = ajaba or ajab}
\end{align*}
\]

As these words are attested several times, and as they never have the expected case ending, these forms require an explanation other than dismissing them as mere slips of the pen

*Ajab-* was derived from the ideogram A A BA. In Amarna, certain ideograms were pronounced according to their Sumerian phonetic value, as is shown by the pronunciation gloss tu-ka for DUG GA in 136/28. Apparently A A BA was pronounced [ajaba], which led to a spelling in which [j] became written. The invariable ending -a reminded the writers of the toponyms which had this ending in all cases. As there existed a variant without any ending for many of these toponyms, *ajaba* was also written *ajab.*

The case of *tamhar-* is more difficult to explain. Youngblood explains *tamhara* as an accusative of specification and *tamhar* as a *status indeterminatus,* which, as the author himself remarks, is “a rare phenomenon in Rib-Haddi”[30] This explanation of *tamhara* is entirely ad hoc. In a construction like šar tamhara one expects a genitive, and as far as I know, there are no other examples of a specifying accusative in this kind of context. Furthermore, since it is not very attractive to analyse šar tamhar and šar tamhara as two different constructions, I would like to

propose an explanation which is no less *ad hoc* than Youngblood's, but has no syntactic consequences. Like *ajab*, *tamhar* follows the toponymical pattern. In the case of *ajab* this was explained by its ideographical origin. For *tamhar* it is impossible to give a similar explanation. Perhaps the expression *šar tamharī*, "king of the battle", the title of an Akkadian epic well known in Amarna, was reinterpreted by the writer as "king of Tamhar". This would have made him adapt *tamhar* to the declensional pattern of other toponyms.

2. Errors in Case Endings

Up till now I have described the general morphology of the Amarna Akkadian case system. Nevertheless we are left with a residue of "errors", i.e. errors in the framework of the grammar of Amarna Akkadian. These errors may originate from different sources:

1. **Orthography.** A substantive may have been adopted from Mesopotamian Akkadian in a petrified, indeclinable form. We can compare this phenomenon with ideograms, which are indeclinable, but function as normal substantives. The same principle can be applied to Akkadian nouns, which may become indeclinable even if they show a petrified case ending. Such words, which are comparable to the so-called pseudo-ideograms, will be called "akkadograms". Actually, these are not errors at all.

2. **Grammar.** It is conceivable that in the substrate language case endings were confused or even dropped. In written texts such a development may result in a great number of errors.

3. **Real scribal errors.** There are a number of instances where the writer simply made a mistake. In view of the great number of verified scribal errors (omission of signs, digraphs, etc.), this category must not be underestimated.

In view of points 1 and 2, it is important to keep the corpora separated.

2.1. **Akkadograms**

The following words should be considered akkadograms.

— In Byblos, the word *še. im. hī. ʾa* is indeclinable. It can be compared with Middle Assyrian, where *šeʿum* is also found as an akkadogram.\(^{31}\)

— In Tyre, the word *a-ma-tam* is only found in this form, e.g. 147/69 *a-ma-tam* GEN. st. r., 155/46 *a-ma-tam* NOM. st.c.\(^{32}\).

— The forms *LUGAL-ri* and *DINGIR. MEŠ-ru-ia* in the letters from Qīltu should be regarded as akkadograms. In these letters, *LUGAL-ri* appears 28 × as a nominative, while the expected nominative form *LUGAL-ru* appears only once. In all other

---


\(^{32}\) O. Loretz, "*ENri* = iwri in EA 286", *UF* 6, 485.
words, -u is the nominative ending (7x) DINGIR MEŠ-nu-ia is found three times as a
genitive, whereas -i is the genitive desinence (5x) in all other words. It is therefore
plausible to treat LUGAL-ri and DINGIR MEŠ-nu-ia as akkadograms. This is corroborated
by evidence from other corpora from Southern Palestine

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Lakhish} & : \quad \text{LUGAL-ri (NOM) } 1 \times \quad \text{LUGAL-ru (NOM) } 2 \times \\
& \quad \text{DINGIR MEŠ-nu-ia (GEN) } 1 \times \quad \text{DINGIR MEŠ-nu-ia (GEN) } 2 \times \\
\text{Jerusalem} & : \quad \text{LUGAL ri (NOM) } 18 \times \quad \text{LUGAL-ru (NOM) } 5 \times \\
\end{align*}
\]

It is not attractive to treat LUGAL-ri in Jerusalem as the Hurrian word /ewri/ in a
way analogous to Loretz' proposal for the Jerusalem form EN-ri. This would
mean that Hurrian words were also used in Qiltu and Lakhish, which would appear
rather odd. Secondly, whether or not the writer of the Jerusalem letters originated
from Syria, there is absolutely no indication for a Hurrian substrate or superstrate
in these letters.

— In Jerusalem, nu-kur-tam is only found as a constituent in a non-verbal
sentence. If we look at other words in a non-verbal sentence, we find -a 4x and -a
only once (ha-an-pa in 288/7). It seems simplest to regard the five instances of nu-
kur-tam as akkadograms.

2.2 Errors resulting from developments in the substrate language

It is impossible to draw a clear line between a simple scribal error and an error
resulting from developments in the substrate language. There are two principles
that can be of help:

1) Simple scribal errors are infrequent. If there were a sizeable corpus in which half
of the case endings were used incorrectly, this could not be explained in terms of
simple scribal errors alone. Yet, with small corpora it may be hard to decide if we
should blame the substrate language.

2) Simple scribal errors occur in an arbitrary way. If we only find errors of the type
NOM sg = -i in a large corpus, this cannot be due to chance.

In view of the large number of properly used case endings, we should treat these 40 instances as simple scribal errors. In § 2.3 I shall enumerate all examples I regard as simple scribal errors, but first I shall
consider Hasor and Tyre.

2.2.1 Hasor

The analysis of the situation in Hasor is hampered by the extreme shortage of

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33) Cf W L Moran The Syrian Scribe of the Jerusalem Amarna Letters in H Goedicke and
J J M Roberts (eds) Unity and Diversity (Baltimore and London 1975) 146 166
available material. Yet, within this tiny corpus we quite often find a genitive in the place of a nominative.

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{st} & \quad \text{r} & \quad \text{NOM} & \quad 1 \times -u \text{ DINIR} \text{ MEŠ-nu} (227/12) \\
& & \quad 2 \times -i \text{ [R-d]} (228/10), \text{ LUGAL-ri} (228/20) \\
\text{st} & \quad \text{r} & \quad \text{GEN} & \quad 4 \times -i \text{ LUGAL-ri} (228/1, 6, 12, 17) \\
& & \quad 1 \times -u \text{ LUGAL-ruu} (228/8 \text{ probably a scribal error}^{34}) \\
\text{st} & \quad \text{pr} & \quad 1 \times -i \text{ ši-ir-ri-ka} (227/16)
\end{align*}
\]

In the accusative there are no errors.

2.2.2 Tyre

The situation in Tyre is interesting. In about half of the instances where one would expect an accusative, the ending \(-u\) occurs, while \(-a\) never appears in the nominative. I shall give all accusatives:

\[
\text{ACC sg} \quad -a \quad 13 \times \quad \text{IR-da} (147/49), \text{ ma-mi-ta} (148/37, 149/60), \text{ tup-pa} (149/11, 71, 77), \\
\text{ u-mu-da} (149/11), \text{ b-im-na} (149/16), \text{ SIG-ta} (151/19), \text{ a-ra-da} (154/15), \text{ LUGAL-ra} (295/9), \text{ ri-ig-ma-šu} (147/13), \text{ tuš-ša-šu} (151/29) \\
\text{-u} \quad 9 \times \quad \text{še-šu} (147/19, 34, 155/9), \text{ ra-bi-ti} (147/62), \text{ nu-kur-tum} (148/35, 151/14), \text{ [qi-na-zu} (151/48 \text{ a gloss), Gš ma-<qi>-bu-ma} (151/48), \text{ mi-um-mi} (149/56)
\]

The last word, mmummi, deserves special attention. It is the only example of mmummi in all corpora I have examined. Though maybe mmummi was indeclinable in Mesopotamia, as the examples in the \textit{CAD} suggest\(^{35}\), this cannot be proved for the Amarna letters. Since there are enough examples in Tyre of accusatives in \(-u\), I think it is appropriate to consider mmummi as one of these. In fact, in the Aziru-letters from Amurru, which I have left out of consideration in this article, we find a nominative mmummi (e.g. 158/11), as opposed to an accusative mmammi (157/37).

More evidence for the use of \(-u\) in the accusative can be found in the expression “day and night.” In the rest of Amarna Akkadian this expression is always used in the accusative mu-ša ur-ra. Yet in 155/30 we find PN be-ta mu-ša ū ur-ra, “PN is my mistress day and night.”

In the genitive, \(-i\) is regularly used, but there are three instances of \(-u\) instead of \(-i\) na me-ku (148/5)\(^{36}\), ti-te-nu (148/33), a-bu-šu (147/8).

How can we account for the case errors treated above? Evidently, something happened to the accusative in the substrate language. It seems improbable that the accusative would have been reduced to zero, for then we would expect not only confusion of the accusative with the nominative case, but also confusion of the

\(^{34}\) Cf. Knudtzon 1915 769
\(^{35}\) Cf. \textit{CAD} M/2, 97ff (sub mmumme)
\(^{36}\) This word may be indeclinable like na₄ chlapakku (323/14, 16, 331/17)
accusative with the genitive. The accusative singular was apparently in the process of merging, or may already have merged, with the nominative sg.\(^{37}\). In the latter case, the -a-forms would be archaisms or akkadianisms, which would not be improbable in Tyre. Morphological interference of West-Semitic is much less pronounced here than in the other corpora. If the accusative sg. was still in the process of merging with the nominative when the Amarna letters were written, we should regard the use of cases in the Akkadian texts as an exact representation of the situation in the substrate language. In this connection, it is important to realize that an accusative form is never found in the place of a nominative. If nominative and accusative were to have merged completely, such confusion would be expected. The genitive is also of some interest in this context. Maybe what we find here are the first beginnings of a development of \(\text{GEN} = -u\).

On the basis of the data from Tyre, we may conclude that the merging of the cases started before short final vowels were dropped. This might have syntactic reasons such as regression of the case system, or phonological reasons such as the loss of opposition between /a/ and /u/ in word final position. If one chooses the phonological option, one must assume that all accusatives in -a are due to Akkadian influence. The forms \(ma-<qi>-bu-ma\) and \(a-bu-šu\) (\(\text{GEN}\)) seem to indicate that a syntactic explanation is in order. Whether we choose a phonological explanation or a syntactic explanation, the data from Tyre do not favour the opinion Moscati expresses for Northwest-Semitic in general, that “in the later languages the endings disappear and with them the formal distinction between the cases”\(^{38}\).

2.3. Scribal errors in other corpora

In the following paragraph I shall enumerate those case errors I regard as simple scribal errors. As construct state forms were already discussed above, they will not be included.

1) NOM = \(i\): Byblos: \(Lú-lim\) (74/12); \(ší-en-ni\) (77/10); \(a-wa-te\) (94/9)\(^{39}\); \(ú-nu-te\) (120/1); Iqrata: \(tup-pi\) (100/1); Gezer: \(ep-ri\) (298/19).

2) NOM = \(a\): Byblos: \(mu-ú-ša\) (86/33); \(mur-ša-ma\) (116/58); \(mi-na\) (81/33)\(^{40}\); Jerusalem: \(ha-an-pa\) (288/7).

3) ACC sg. = \(i\): Byblos: \(Lú-lim\) (108/48); \(Erid.\, Meš\, til'-la-ti\) (104/35); \(tup-pi\) (112/46); \(117/18\); \(ka-li\) (116/15); \(ša-ri\) (117/55); \(Uru-lim\) (118/34); Kumidi: \(Lugal-ri\) (194/)

\(^{37}\) A few centuries after the Amarna period a similar development took place in Mesopotamia, cf. GAG § 63c.

\(^{38}\) S. Moscati ed., An Introduction to the Comparative Grammar of the Semitic Languages (Wiesbaden 1964) 95.

\(^{39}\) W.L. Moran, A Syntactical Study of the Dialect of Byblos as reflected in the Amarna Tablets (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, Baltimore 1950) 161, interprets \(a-wa-te\) as \(awat+i\), “my word”. If this is correct, we have here one of the very few instances of the 1 sg. suffix -i.

\(^{40}\) Moran 1950, 156, interprets this sentence as \(mi-na \langle a-wa-hu-na\rangle \, a-na\ldots\). If this is correct, the accusative in \(mina\) is correct.
7); Acre: gab-bi (233/19); mi-im-mi (234/16); Megiddo: ba-ga-ni (244/14); Gezer: ep-ši (270/10); ša-ri (297/18); Jerusalem: e-za-bi (287/62); Lakhish: ep-ri (330/15); Qiltu: nu-kür-ti (366/32).

4) AKK = u: Byblos: a-wa-tu-ia (74/50); ka-az-bu-tu (129/37, explained by a gloss showing the correct case ending); Jerusalem: a-si-ru (287/54)

5) GEN = u: Byblos: LUGAL-ru(m) (76/13; 131/19); an-nu-tum (73/25); ha-za-nu-tu(m) (118/45; 126/10); ú-nu-tu-ia (119/56); Jerusalem: LUGAL-ru (288/61); Ashqalon: AN-ú (326/2).

6) GEN = a: Gezer: da-ri-ia-ta (294/35)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total</th>
<th>NOM = i: 6x</th>
<th>ACC sg. = i: 16x</th>
<th>GEN = a: 1x</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NOM = a: 5x</td>
<td>ACC = u: 3x</td>
<td>GEN = u: 7x</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The forms listed above constitute only a small percentage of the total number of attested forms. For example, in the whole Amarna corpus outside of Tyre, 19 case errors can be found in the accusative singular. Yet, even if we confine ourselves to the Byblos corpus, we find no less than 123 instances of the regular ending -a.

2.4. Status rectus forms without an ending

If we leave out of consideration the words tamhar and ajab, which have been dealt with above, forms without an ending used in a position where a status rectus is required can be explained in two ways:
- a construct state was used erroneously,
- the case ending was erroneously dropped.

Examples of the erroneous use of a construct state can be found in constructions with ša. A genitival relationship can be expressed by means of a constructus-linking or by the word ša, which leaves the nomen regens in the status rectus. There are cases where both a construct state and ša are used:

//ra-bi-š ša LUGAL (321/15)
LÚ[ra]-bi-š [ša] LUGAL (328/17)
LÚ qar-tab ša ANŠ.E.KUR.RA.MEŠ-ka (331/6)

A relative clause is generally formed with the relative pronoun ša. There is an alternative to this relative clause construction, which is probably taken from Mesopotamian Akkadian, in which the antecedent of the relative clause is put into the construct state and the pronoun ša is not used, e.g. a-wa-at ul-te-bi-la LUGAL (267/9).

Yet in Gezer we may also find a construct state before a relative clause introduced by ša:

[a]-wa-at ša iš-tap-par [LUGAL] (278/9)
a-wa-at ša iš-pu-ur LUGAL (293/8)
a-wa-at ša qa-ba LUGAL (294/12).
The examples of erroneous dropping of the case ending should be considered scribal errors:

NOM sg. gab-mi (127/15: from Byblos)
GEN sg. ša-bat (149/66: Tyre); mu-ta-a-an (244/32: Megiddo).

3. THE USE OF THE CASES

In the analysis of the morphology of the case system given above, I only discussed nouns used in the following "basic case functions":

- NOMINATIVE subject of a verbal sentence
- subject or predicate of a non-verbal sentence
- ACCUSATIVE direct object
- GENITIVE element after a preposition

In addition to these three cases there is a locative case ending -u(m)(ma)

Now we will look at the use of case in situations other than these "basic functions".

3.1. Adverbial phrases

In Amarna Akkadian, adverbial constituents not preceded by a preposition are treated in the following way.

3.1.1. Indication of time

Time is indicated by the accusative, e.g.
93/25 [Su]mma MU KAM annita janu ERÍN MEŠ pišata (...) “If there won’t be any archers this year” (...).
292/23 u anuma ʾštemu U₄ KAM-ma u muša awate MEŠ (...) “Look, I listen day and night to the words (...).

One sentence from Tyre seems to constitute a counter example.
155/30 PN be-š-ti-ia mušu u ʾurra, “PN is my mistress, day and night”.

In Tyre, the nominative and the accusative are often confused.

3.1.2. Indication of place

In non-prepositional locative phrases, the locative case is used. In fact, the only examples of this practice occur in the prostration formula, e.g.
233/9 ana gir MEŠ LUGAL-ri (...) 7-šu 7-tan ušhehen u kabatuna u širuma “At the feet of the king (...) I prostrate myself seven times and seven times, on my belly and on my back”.

The locative case also occurs in West-Semitic glosses:
232/1 ina bante/ša-at-ma u širuma/ši-uš-ru-ma, “on my belly/on my belly and on my back/on my back”.

3.1.3. *Indication of situation*

Although it is much more usual to indicate a situation by means of a prepositional phrase, there are a few examples of a situational accusative, e.g. 87/17 *u uššam riqūtam*, “and he went away empty-handed”.

There is one very interesting passage in a letter from Megiddo where a word in the locative case is explained by a gloss in the accusative.

245/6 *u TiL.LA-nu-um-ma / ha-ia-ma nubbaluššu ana LUGAL-ri*, “and then we can send him alive / alive to the king”

The form of words only used in order to specify the verb is a lexical matter. This obtains in adverbs, including those which have the Akkadian terminative ending -iš, e.g. *puhrīš-mi* (254/24), which Moran translates as “continuellement”41. Forms with the terminative desinence may also appear after prepositions, e.g. *kima arḫiš* “as fast as possible” (73/45 a.o.). As opposed to the locative case, the terminative most probably was not productive in Amarna.

3.2. *The case after janu, “there is not”*

Unlike Middle Babylonian, where the nominative is used in a construction with *janu*, Amarna Akkadian uses the accusative with this word42), e.g.

117/9 *janu ḥazana, 244/39 janu panima šanutam*

A nominative or a genitive occur only rarely:

69/23 *janum LŪ-lum, 85/53 janu l-u, 74/32 *janu LŪ-lim, 119/42 janu ša-bi šana.*

These examples are from Byblos, where the accusative is found 21x.

In Tyre and Jerusalem the nominative is used.

148/38 *janu LÚ. [gi]R sanu, 155/20 janu epru janu šamu.*

The accusative appears once: *janu balṭasū* (153/14). As I mentioned before, in Tyre the nominative and the accusative are often confused.

In Jerusalem the nominative appears 8x. Only in the two following examples a different case is used:


3.3. *The case after umma, “thus”*

The case after *umma* has already been discussed by R. Marcus and other authors43). However, they did not take into account that a majority of the proper names are indeclinable. As proper names very often occur after *umma*, their analysis is not fully reliable. Furthermore, they neglected the variation between the different corpora. If we exclude proper names from our data it becomes clear that *umma* was used in two different ways.

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41) Moran 1987, 481.
— *umma* is used as an introductory particle. The word following it is in the nominative case. In Mesopotamia, this use of *umma* constitutes the regular pattern. In Amarna it appears in Sidon, Acre, Pihili, Shechem and in the Shuwardata-letters, e.g. 232/5 (Acre) *ep-ru*.

— *umma* is used as a preposition or as a substantive. The word following it has genitive case. This construction appears in Iruzata, Amqi, Ginti-Kirmil (the Tagi letters), Ashqalon, Lakhish, Kumidi and Beirut-1, e.g. 320/7 (Ashqalon) *ep-ri*. *Ep-ra* in 321/7 (Ashqalon) is a scribal error.

3.4. The pendent case

For the purpose of this article I shall define a noun in the pendent case as a noun at the beginning of the sentence which is referred to by a pronominal element in the second part of the sentence. As pronominal reference to the subject is obligatory, I shall not take into consideration subject forms at the beginning of the sentence. We may distinguish two types of pendent case, one in which the noun in the pendent case is referred to by an object suffix, and one in which it is referred to by a genitive suffix.

3.4.1 Pronominal reference by an object suffix

Pronominal reference to the object is not obligatory. When the object stands before the verb, two sentence types are possible.

a) There is no pronominal reference to the object in the second part of the sentence, e.g. 298/14 (Gezer) *u mema* (= *minma*) ša iqabbi LUGAL EN-ia ana jaši išteme magal magal, “and to everything the king my lord said to me I listened very very well”.

b) There is pronominal reference to the object in the second part of the sentence. This is a *casus pendens* construction, e.g. 297/8 (Gezer) *mimma ša qaba LUGAL EN-la ana jaši ištemišu magal ŠIG₂-iš, “everything the king my lord said to me I listened to it very well”

For most towns it is impossible to establish which case was used when a noun in the pendent case was referred to by an object pronoun in the second part of the sentence. Only for Jerusalem can we find clear evidence. Here the nominative is used:

286/9 *amur* anaku la LÚ abija u la mí ummija šaknani ina ašri annē, “Look! Me, neither my father nor my mother put me in this place”.

289/9 LÚ ḥaziānu ša epaš epaš anniju amminim LUGAL-ri la ša’alšu, “The prince who performed this deed, why does the king not ask him?”.

However, we cannot be sure this was the situation in every town. Two sentences from Gezer and Ashqalon (297/8 and 320/18) might imply that an accusative was

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44) Cf GAG § 121/10b
used in these two towns. Unfortunately, in both sentences the noun in the pendent case is mimma, “everything”, which is often indeclinable. Although forms like gabbi m[\text{n}m'i] (325/15, Ashqalon) and gabba' mimme (378/21, Gezer) suggest that mimma, “everything”, was declinable in these two corpora, one cannot be sure.

3.4.2. Pronominal reference by a genitive suffix

In the other type of pendent case, the preposed constituent is referred to by a genitive suffix. Here the nominative case always occurs, both in verbal and in non-verbal sentences.

83/12 u l.U šanu lage l.U-šu, “And another man, his servant was taken away”.

118/39 amur anaku panuja-ma ana arad LUGAL, “Look, I, my face is set to serve the king”.

This type of pendent case is attested in Byblos, Tyre and the Shuwardata letters.

It should be noted that in one sentence a preposed constituent has nominative case, while there is no pronominal reference to it in the second part of the sentence:

107/10 u puja awate. ME& aqbu ana LUGAL-ri kitama, “as for my mouth, I said words to the king in truth”.

4. CONCLUSIONS

The morphology of the Amarna Akkadian case system is quite similar to its counterparts in other Semitic Languages. However, the system has several interesting peculiarities.

1) In the singular of the construct state no case marking appears. Instead, there is a partly phonologically determined variation between the epenthetical vowel -i and the absence of an ending.

2) In the nom./acc. singular before the pronominal suffix of the first person singular, -ija usually occurs. -Aja and -uja are quite rare in the singular. The pronominal suffix -i is practically only attested with the word bêlu. Only in Beirut-1, the letters sent by Rib-Addi of Byblos during his stay in Beirut, the opposition -i vs. -ija remains.

3) Before other pronominal suffixes triptotic declension regularly appears.

4) Toponyms are indeclinable. There is no reason to suppose a diptotic declensional pattern for toponyms or for proper names, comparable to the one found in Ugarit.

5) In general, case ending are used correctly. Yet in Tyre a nominative case ending is often used where we would expect an accusative.

The four productive cases in Amarna Akkadian are used in the following contexts:
NOM with — constituents of a non-verbal sentence,
- subjects of a verbal sentence,
- nouns in the pendent case.

ACC with — direct objects,
- words after *janu*,
- adverbial phrases as far as they are not expressed by a locative or by a prepositional phrase.

GEN with — the *nomen rectum* in a genitive construction,
- after a preposition.

The locative case, finally, is used in locative phrases. This case is rather rare.