



Sumerograms and Akkadograms in Minoan Hittite

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here to *KBo* XII 42 and its slightly older duplicate *ABOT* 49. In my edition of these two fragments (*JCS* 22 (1968): 34-45) I concluded that on the basis of the limited number of distinctive forms it could not be shown to be Old Hittite. Yet some forms seemed archaic (*i-ya-ta* and *ta-me-e-ta*). Upon further study I have observed two other spellings which point to the MH period: *ú-e-da-u-e-ni* is indeed found in later texts (cf. *JCS* 22: 35, n. 10), but is also characteristic of MH texts (Cat. nos. 88, 99, 178.8, 329, 356, 430; XXXI 44, XXXVI 115+); the spelling of "goods" as *a-aš-šu-u-ya-wa* with the extra *-u* is also characteristic of MH texts (89, 95, 277). My earlier remarks on *iyata* and *tameta* without final *r* can be supplemented now. Almost all cases of dropped final *r* occur in OH and MH texts: *hattata* (6, 275), *iyata* (196.2A, 257A), *kušduwata* (6), *miyata* (282A), *tameta* (196.2A, 358, 469.2), *hatrešša* (272). The *ú-e-eš-wa-za* LÚ.MEŠ DAM.GÀR.HÁ should now be translated "we (are) the merchants of . . ." The *-za* is necessary in Middle and Empire Hittite in nominal sentences with 1st or 2d person subjects (cf. *JNES* 28 (1969): 225-230). Two linguistic forms, however, seem to militate against attributing the text to the Middle Hittite period: *har-ú-e-ni* should be *har-wa-ni* in MH, and *na-an-ni-ya-u-e-ni* should be **na-an-ni-ú-e-ni* on analogy with MH forms *pí-ú-e-ni* and *up-pí-ú-e-ni*. Thus the dating of *KBo* XII 42 and duplicate is still uncertain, although more evidence is now before us. I am inclined to date the text in the last portion of the Middle Hittite period or perhaps in the reign of Šuppiliuma I. Its forms are too archaic for Muršili II.

It would not be possible, short of writing a new companion volume, for a reviewer to comment fully on every aspect of this truly remarkable little volume. This reviewer finds himself in essential agreement with the author's suspicion that the traditional chronological ordering of the Hittite texts has resulted in the incorrect dating of a considerable number of texts. Of course, other reviewers will disagree. One thing is

clear: the appearance of this volume has initiated a new stage in the debate within Hittitological circles over the dating of texts by linguistic criteria.

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August 1970

Sumerograms and Akkadograms in Minoan Hittite. By SIMON DAVIS. Johannesburg: Witwatersrand University Press, 1969. Pp. 45.

Mr. Davis is the author of *The Decipherment of the Minoan Linear A and Pictographic Scripts* (Johannesburg, Witwatersrand University Press, 1967). His opinion is that the language of these scripts is "Hittite," by which he means the language of the cuneiform inscriptions from ancient Hattušaš. In the previously mentioned book he set forth this opinion and sought to demonstrate its correctness at great length. He did not convince this reviewer. In the volume under review he seeks to add to his readers' conviction by outlining the use in these scripts of what he calls "Sumerograms and Akkadograms." His basis for the justification of finding such logograms is the analogy of the cuneiform Hittite texts from Hattušaš.

At the outset let me assure the reader that I fully appreciate and sympathize with the problems which face a would-be decipherer. Any newly-recovered language will not fit all rules established for its previously known linguistic relatives. If we grant Davis his assumption that the language of these documents is a form of Hittite, we cannot expect that it should be spelled in precisely the same way as in the Boğazköy texts, or that all grammatical forms will be the same, and so forth. Still, any would-be decipherer must grant to his critics that he has the obligation to build a convincing case for his decipherment on data which concur with the "rules," not the exceptions. When he has done this, he is then entitled to explain to his "converts" the exceptions. It seems to this reviewer that

Davis has not succeeded in the first step. Minoan "Hittite" looks like no Hittite which I have ever seen in the Boğazköy tablets. Again and again Davis is obliged to attribute meanings to Hittite words which do not exist in the acknowledged inscriptions. Other words, not known from Hittite, he discovers and gives to them meanings as he sees fit. For example: *ha-sa-mi-zi* "heavy," *gi-nu-la-ya* "child," *ya'-mi* "servant," and *he-wa* "child." And yet despite all this license which he has allowed himself in the attributions of meanings to words (not to speak of the entire question of determination of phonetic values for the signs!), his translations of the texts make little sense. And this, after all, is the final test of any decipherment attempt. But enough about his proposed decipherment. What of his discussion of the "Akkadograms and Sumerograms"? It seems to me that he does not even understand what a Sumerogram is! The terms "Sumerogram" and "Akkadogram" are specific terms designating logograms based upon Sumerian and Akkadian words. It is important to understand at the outset that *these are only found in documents written in the logo-syllabic orthography* (i.e., not even all cuneiform systems!) *which originated in Babylonia*. Thus no Sumerograms or Akkadograms are to be found in the derivative cuneiform systems employed for Ugaritic and Old Persian, or in the hieroglyphic writing system employed to write Luwian (the so-called Hieroglyphic Hittite writing system). Furthermore, although Akkadograms (limited to cuneiform Hittite) consist of a phonetic spelling by syllabic signs of the particular Akkadian word, Sumerograms are expressed in the "standard orthography." That is, if one wishes to write Sumerian *GE*₈ "night," one may not write it with any other **GE* sign than *GE*₈ (= *MI*). One should also keep in mind that the number of Akkadograms in Hittite texts is not infinite. Each newly recovered tablet does not add scores of new examples. The scribes of ancient Hattušaš employed a limited repertoire of Sumerograms and Akkadograms. This makes one skeptical, when one reads in this book of so many examples which are not yet attested in real Hittite texts, and fails to find any

examples cited here of Sumerograms and Akkadograms which are so terribly common in the Hittite texts from Asia Minor (*ana* "to," *ina* "in," *ištu* "with," *išme* "he/she heard," *DUB.SAR* "scribe," etc., etc.). Has Davis asked himself why this should be so? Why, after all, does Hittite employ logograms? Of course, since Davis is not an Assyriologist, he may not be aware of these matters. But then, unless he secures for himself the services of an Assyriologist consultant, he ought not to undertake the writing of a book on Sumerograms and Akkadograms. No Assyriologist consultant is mentioned in his preface. In fact, neither is Davis a Hittitologist, which does not deter him from writing about *Sumerograms* and *Akkadograms* in Minoan *Hittite*! It comes as no surprise then, when the reader who *is* actively engaged in either Assyriology or Hittitology finds on every page errors in the interpretation of Sumerian, Akkadian, and Hittite words. Since to list only a tenth of these errors would consume far too much space for a review of this type, I will mention only a few. The following Sumerian words with the meanings attributed to them by Davis do not exist: *KID* "woman," *KALAG* "manly," *ḪAR* "slave," *EME.SAL* "peasant," *GUR₃.RU* "number, total," *KA.BAR* "bronze," *NE₃* "work." The following Akkadian words with the meanings attributed to them by Davis do not exist: *ardanānu* "person, menial," *minūtu* (= Sum. *GUR₃*) "number, total," *emūqu* "work," and *dinu* "cattle." One would think that an outsider to these disciplines would carefully refrain from exceeding the wording of the most-up-to-date and reliable dictionaries. But quite often we find in Davis' book such ill-informed statements as "*lu₂* as in *lu₂-gal₃-lu₂* is a determinative for 'man'" (p. 32). Only by such irresponsible reasoning can he in other parts of the book (p. 24) maintain that "*GAL.LU*" (*GAL₃.LU*??) is the Sumerian word for "man." Many of his mistakes can be traced to his dependence upon outdated dictionaries such as A. Deimel's *Šumerisches Lexikon*. But in addition Davis does not always confine himself to what his dictionaries have told him. He adds his own additional mean-

ings! In the case of the Hittite language he is no better. Totally dependent upon Friedrich's *Hethitisches Wörterbuch*, he even here misinterprets Friedrich's entries or else feels free to "extend" the meaning a little to fit his own ideas. According to him, *pangar* (p. 22) means "number," *haršar* (p. 26) means "person." Magnanimously he offers to help those Hittitologists who only enjoy the use of the texts from the land of Hatti itself, by supplying them with the unknown readings of certain high frequency words always represented by Sumerograms on cuneiform Hittite tablets: *SAL-aš* "woman" (not pronounced in Sumerian as **sal* but **mi* or **munus*, thus hardly to be written phonetically in "Minoan Hittite" as *sa-la!*), *ir-iš* "slave," and *DUMU-aš* "son." For "*SAL*"-*aš* he offers *guwenāš*, remarkably close to the **kuin*- suggested by Götze and Pedersen in 1934 (*Muršilis Sprachlähmung*, p. 65; cf. *HWb*, p. 114), whom Davis does not mention. Of course, this 1934 suggestion, which was probably influenced by the same etymology proffered by Davis, is unproven and has been rejected by Friedrich in *HWb*, p. 114. For *ir-iš* "slave" he proposes *niniš*. This too, although Davis mentions nothing to indicate it, seems to have been influenced by an old interpretation in *HWb*, p. 329, of the Luwian word *naniš* as "Sklave(?), Diener(?)," for which now Laroche and Friedrich prefer "brother" (*HWb, Erg.* 2, p. 41). For *DUMU-aš* "son" Davis claims *hūaš*. I suspect that Hittitologists will politely decline the assistance of Linear A, as interpreted by Mr. Davis. They will be suspicious of the competence of a man who writes that the ending of the Hittite common gender noun is either "-s or -z(a)" (p. 8), and who believes that the Akkadian word *kirru* ("lamb" according to Davis) was loaned into Hittite as *ki-ru-za* with the Hittite (nominative?!) ending -*za* (p. 18)!

One hesitates to review a book so incompetent as this one. It is a thankless task. Readers who know any of the three above-mentioned languages will see in a moment that it proposes nonsense. But Classicists in particular or non-linguistically oriented archaeologists, who quite legitimately take an interest in attempts to interpret the Linear A tablets from Crete,

should be warned not to take this latest attempt seriously. For all Davis' hard work and sincere faith in his results, he has produced no clear evidence that Linear A was used to write a language either identical with or related to cuneiform Hittite. No one knows as yet what languages may have been written in the Linear A script. Others have suggested a Semitic language. If the linguistic situation on Crete during the second millennium B.C. was as variegated as Homer would have us believe, the existing scripts were probably used for the writing of several languages at once, in a fashion analogous to the logo-syllabic cuneiform system in Asia Minor and Mesopotamia. Whatever the truth may be about the identity of these languages, each scholar who takes it in hand to solve this riddle must know well the language which he suspects was being written and must discipline himself to avoid those facile assumptions which every would-be decipherer makes, often without even realizing he is making them. With genuine regret I must emphatically reject the theory advanced in this volume by S. Davis. I see no real evidence that he has successfully identified Sumerograms or Akkadograms in the Linear A texts.

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The Collection of Sumerian Temple Hymns.

By ÅKE W. SJÖBERG and EUGEN BERGMANN, S.J.† and *The Keš Temple Hymn.*

By GENE B. GRAGG. "Texts from Cuneiform Sources," Vol. 3. Locust Valley, N.Y., Augustin, 1969. Pp. 202 + 38 pls. \$20.00.

Die beiden in *TCS* 3 veröffentlichten sumerischen literarischen Texte haben zwar den Gegenstand (Lieder auf Tempel) gemein und weisen einen Refrain auf. Sonst sind sie aber recht verschieden in der Anlage. Die Sammlung von Liedern auf die Tempel Babylonien umfasst 42 einzelne kurze Hymnen auf Heiligtümer in ganz Babylonien, die sehr wahrscheinlich dem Preis des Königs Sargon für die Wiederherstellung im Krieg gegen Lugalzaggesi zerstörter Tempel dient.¹ Die Keshymne dagegen besteht aus 8

¹ S. dazu demnächst in *ZA* 62 (1972).