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AN OLD HITTITE FRAGMENT IN THE BRITISH MUSEUM

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IN early October of 1977 under the terms of the National Endowment for the Humanities grant for the *Chicago Hittite Dictionary* I was able to travel to Berlin, Paris, and London to collate published tablets of interest for the dictionary. The purpose of the collations was twofold: to check the accuracy of the published copies for specific signs and to determine the script of each tablet or fragment for purposes of dating.

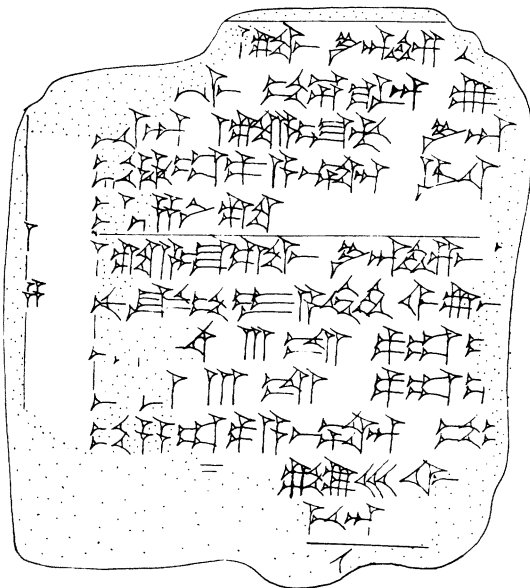


FIG. 1.—BM no. 10856 (copy by H. A. Hoffner, Jr.); earlier copy published by L. W. King, *Hittite Texts in the Cuneiform Character from Tablets in the British Museum* (London, 1920), pl. 49, no. 95

I would like to thank Professor Edmond Sollberger, Keeper of Western Asiatic Antiquities in the British Museum, for allowing me to examine the published Hittite fragments in the British Museum. In the course of this examination I discovered that the fragment copied by King as HT 95 is in what now is called the typical old ductus. Since interest in the Old Hittite corpus is at present quite high, and Professor Neu is preparing a corpus of the texts in the typical old writing, it seems useful to report here on this fragment.

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0022-2968/78/3704-0006\$00.53.

In general I found that King's copies of all the Hittite fragments were quite accurate, in spite of the fact that they were made prior to the decipherment of the language. Exceptions are in his frequent drawing of the so-called "long LI" (Forrer, *BoTU* I, sign no. 158, first shape; *StBoT* 20, sign no. 274, cols. i-ix) with two Winkelhakens replacing the second rank of short horizontals, and in his drawing the NU in which the Winkelhaken is exactly bisected by the horizontal wedge as though the former lay "below" the latter.

The accompanying new copy shows what appeared from the reexamination of HT 95. As can be seen, the sign shapes are quite close to those represented in cols. i-iii of *StBoT* 20. Note in particular signs E, RA, GA, TA, AH, Ú, and LU. As on other old tablets written in the old script, there is a tendency to crowd together the signs pertaining to the same word. This could be seen with *šu-up-pí-ia-ah-hi* (line 7') even in King's copy. Unnoticed by King was the fact that the first sign in each line began on the lefthand column divider, also a feature of the old tablets.

As expected, the fragment also shows features of Old Hittite orthography: *pé-e-ra-an* (2'), *ša¹-an* or *ta¹-an* (3'), syllabic writing of "god" *ši-ú-n[i?-. . .]* (7'), old writing of *kaluiššana-* as *ga-lu-eš-ši[-. . .]* (11') instead of *kal-ú-is-. . .*

In his *Catalogue des textes hittites* (2d ed.), Laroche classifies HT 95 under entry no. 676.3, which pertains to the cult of Nerik. This classification by Laroche is undoubtedly due to the reading by Laroche in the shelf list KUB 30.68 rev. 4'-5': *ma-a]l-te-eš-na-aš* ^m*Ta-a-at-ta* LÚ. ^a[M . . . LÚ.ME]Š NAR *ki-i ŠA* ^{URU}*Ne-«ni»-r[i-ig-ga . . .]* (cf. *CTH*, pp. 173 f.). There is no need for this emendation, in spite of the since-published KBo 16.81 i 1, 11, where a ^m*Tattaš* LÚ. ^a[IM] appears in a text dealing with the storm god of Nerik. Of all the passages which were cited by Laroche in *Les noms des hittites* sub Tatta, that which is most similar to HT 95 is KUB 28.45 vi, and indubitably there (*CTH* 744.2) is where one should place HT 95. And since KUB 28.45 is a copy in New Script of an Old Hittite composition, we may even propose that HT 95 is a fragment of an Old Script copy of the same composition.