Observations on the Similarities and Differences between the Hittite and the Babylonian-Assyrian Colophons

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The Hittites used the Babylonian cuneiform script from the beginning of their Old Kingdom in the early 16th (or middle of the 17th) century onwards. This script is not only a means of communication which could be easily passed from one culture to the next; to borrow the cuneiform writing always meant to adopt Sumero-Akkadian learning. The techniques for learning cuneiform were based on the study of a canon of Mesopotamian scholarly texts.

Already during the mid-3rd millennium the scribes working with large tablet collections such as those at Fara,[1] Abū Ṣalābīḫ,[2] and Ebla[3] had added short colophons to their copies of texts. During the Old Babylonian period scribes usually identified themselves by giving their name, and they dated their copy or provided other additional information such as the number of a tablet within a series of tablets, the number of lines and/or the title of a composition. The climax in the development of the colophon was reached in the 7th century B.C., when scribes working for the library of Assurbanipal devoted much of the last column of a tablet to the colophon.[4]

The Hittite scribes[5] responsible for the vast "libraries"[6] in the Hittite

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[1] A. Deimel, *Die Inschriften von Fara II: Schultexte aus Fara* (WVDOG 45), Leipzig 1924, 2*-7*.

[2] R.D. Biggs, *Inscriptions from Tell Abū Ṣalābīkh* (OIP 99), Chicago / London 1974, 33-35.

[3] D.O. Edzard, *Hymnen, Beschwörungen und Verwandtes (aus dem Archiv L. 2769)* (ARET 5), Roma 1984, 30, Nr. 6 xviii 4-7; 51 sub DUB.SAR and DUB.ZU.ZU.

[4] For Mesopotamian colophons see E. Leichty, "The Colophon", in: *Studies Presented to A. Leo Oppenheim*, Chicago, Ill. 1964, 147-154; H. Hunger, *Babylonische und assyrische Kolophone* (AOAT 2), Kevelaer / Neukirchen-Vluyn 1968; *idem*, "Kolophon", in: *RlA* 6 (1981) 186-187; R. Borger, "Bemerkungen zu den akkadischen Kolophonen", *WO* 5 (1970) 165-171.

[5] For more information on scribes see, *i.a.*, L.M. Mascheroni, "Scribi hurriti a Boğazköy: Una verifica prosopografica", *SMEA* 24 (1984) 151-173; C. Karasu, "Some Considerations on Hittite Scribes", *ArAnat* 1 (1995) 117-121.

capital Ḫattuša adopted this organisational device and used it for their purposes. The Hittite libraries date to a period which in Babylonia and Assyria has left only limited numbers of literary tablets; Hunger's catalogue gives only 33 colophons from Middle Babylonian and Middle-Assyrian tablets.[7] A comparison between the data provided by the scribes of the Hittite capital and those of the extensive colophons of the 1st millennium B.C. might contribute to a better understanding of the development of the colophons in a wider Ancient Near Eastern perspective.

The fully developed Mesopotamian colophon according to E. Leichty and H. Hunger may yield the following data (though usually not every element appears in one and the same colophon):

1) The catch-line (*Stichzeile*[8]).
2) Number of the tablet (*Tafelnummer*).
3) The name/title of the series to which the tablet belongs (*Titel des Werkes*).
4) The number of lines on the tablet (*Zeilenzahl*).
5) The procedure by which the tablet was written (copy of an original, copy according to dictation, collation, etc.) (*Schreibvorgang*).
6) Source (*Vorlage*).
7) The name of the scribe (*Schreiber*).
8) The name of the owner of the tablet (*Eigentümer*).
9) The client (*Auftraggeber*).
10) The supervisor (*Prüfer*).
11) The purpose for producing the copy (*Zweck des Schreibens*).
12) Wishes of the scribe (concerning his own fate or the future treat-

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6 For further information see E. Laroche, "La Bibliothèque de Ḫattuša", *ArOr* 17/2 (1949) 7-23; H. Otten, "Bibliotheken im Alten Orient", *Das Altertum* 1 (1955) 67-81; E. Laroche, *Catalogue des textes hittites*, Paris 1971, chapitre XX: Débris de fichier, pp. 153-193; H. Otten, "Kolophon bei den Hethitern", in: *RlA* 6, Berlin 1980-1983, 187 f.; *idem*, "Archive und Bibliotheken in Ḫattuša" in: K. Veenhof (ed.), *Cuneiform Archives and Libraries, Papers read at the 30ᵉ Rencontre Assyriologique Internationale, Leiden, 4-8 July 1983*, Istanbul 1986, 184-190; S. Košak, "The Palace Library 'Building A' on Büyükkale", in: Th.P.J. van den Hout / J. de Roos (eds.), *Studio Historiae Ardens. Ancient Near Eastern Studies Presented to Philo H.J. Houwink ten Cate on the Occassion of his 65th Birthday* (PIHANS 74), Leiden 1995, 173-179; C. Karasu, "Some Remarks on Archive-Library Systems of Ḫattuša-Boğazköy", *ArAnat* 2 (1996, app. 1997) 39-59.
7 According to W.G. Lambert, *WO* 5 (1969) 290 f., Nr. 40 is a late Babylonian tablet.
8 As a Turkish term we suggest "Hatırlatma satırı".

ment of his tablet) (*Wünsche des Schreibers*).

13)   Curses, blessings or invocations (*Flüche, Segnungen oder Anru-fungen*).

14)   The date (*Datum*).

15)   Disposition of the copy (*Einteilung des Exemplars*).

The following selection of text passages covers the relevant kinds of information present in colophons on tablets from Ḫattuša. For more colophons from Hittite library tablets see my article quoted in fn. 6.

CTH 6 Political testament of Ḫattušili I (Bilingual Akkadian-Hittite).
KUB I 16 + KUB XL 65 rev. iii and iv : Akkadian colophon

73   *ṭup-pí Ta-ba-ar-na* LUGAL.GAL *i-nu-ma*

74   LUGAL.GAL *Ta-ba-ar-na i-na* ᵁᴿᵁ*Ku-uš-šar*ᴷᴵ *im-ra-aṣ-ṣú-ma* TUR-*am* ᵐ*Mu-u*[*r-ši-li*]

75   *a-na* LUGAL-*ru-tim ú-ṷa-a-ru*

"The tablet of Tabarna, the great king. At the time when the great king Tabarna fell ill at Kuššar and (when) he designated(!) young Mu[ršili] for kingship."

CTH 19 Telipinu proclamation, Hittite version.
KBo III 67 + KUB XXXI 2 + KUB XXXI 17 rev. iv

35   DUB I ᴷᴬᴹ

36   *ŠA* ᵐ*Te-li-pí-nu QA-TI*

"The first tablet of Telipinu. Complete."

CTH 258 Instructions of Tudḫaliịa II.
KUB XIII 7 rev. iv

x+1   DUB IIᴷᴬᴹ ᵐ*Tu-ut-ḫa-li-ịa* L⌈UGAL.G⌉AL

2′   *ŠA MA-ME-TI* (erasure) *QA-TI*

3′   *ki-i ṬUP-PU ar-ḫa ḫar-ra-an e-eš*[-*ta*]⁹

4′   *na-at*¹ *A-NA PA-NI* ᵐ*Ma-aḫ-ḫu-zi*

5′   *Ù A-NA* ᵐ*Ḫal-ṷa*-LÚ

6′   *ú-uk* ᵐ*Du-da-aš*

7′   EGIR-*pa ne-ṷa-aḫ-ḫu-un*

"The second tablet (on) the oaths of the great king Tudḫaliịa. Complete. This tablet was destroyed. I (the scribe) Duda made it anew in the presence of Maḫḫuzi and Ḫalṷa-ziti."

CTH 491 Purification ritual.
KUB XLIII 58 rev. iv

10′   DUB I?[ᴷᴬᴹ Sĺ]SKUR *a-zu-u-*⌈*ri*⌉ *QA-TI*

11′   *ki-i pár-ku-i ṬUP-Pí*

"The first(?) tablet of the *azuri* [ri]tual. Complete. This is a clear/faultless tablet."

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⁹ For the reconstruction see L.M. Mascheroni, "A propos d'un groupe de colophons problématiques", *Hethitica* 5 (1983) 96.

CTH 610 12ᵗʰ-13ᵗʰ days of the Hittite ANTAḪŠUM festival.

KUB XX 8 rev. vi

x+1   ⌜DUB III⌝ᴷᴬᴹ EZEN₄ AN.TAḪ.ŠU[Mˢᴬᴿ]

2'   ŠA É ᴰZi-pár-u̯aₐ QA-[TI]

3'   nu-uš-ša-an ke-e-da-ni tup-pí-⌜i̯a⌝

4'   ták-na-aš ŠA ᴰUTU-aš

5'   EZEN₄ AN.TAḪ.ŠUMˢᴬᴿ

6'   zi-in-na-an pár-ku-i ṬUP-PÍ

7'   ŠU ᵐḪa-pa-ti-UR.MAḪ

8'   DUMU ᵐTu-u̯a-at-LÚ

9'   PA-NI ᵐA-nu-u̯a-an-zi ᴸᵁSAG

10'   IŠ-ṬUR

"The third tablet of the ANTAḪŠU[Mˢᴬᴿ] festival in the temple of the god Ziparu̯a. Compl[ete]. On this tablet the ANTAḪŠUMˢᴬᴿ festival of the Sun Goddess of the earth (has) come to an end (with this) clear/faultless tablet. The hand of Ḫapati-u̯alu̯a, son of Tuu̯at-ziti; he wrote it in the presence of Anuu̯anza, the chief (scribe)."

CTH 626 Outline of the festival of haste (nuntarrii̯ašḫa).

KUB II 9 rev. vi

3'   DUB Iᴾᵁ Ú-UL QA-TI

4'   ŠA EZEN₄ nu-un-tar-i̯a-aš-ḫa-aš

5'   ma-a-an LUGAL-uš

6'   ᵁᴿᵁA-ri-in-na

7'   A-NA EZEN₄ nu-un-tar-i̯a-aš-ḫa-aš

8'   [p]a-iz-zi

9'   [ki]-i pár-ku-i ṬUP-PU

10'   [A-N]A GIŠ.ḪUR-kán ḫa-an-da-an

"The first tablet of the nuntarrii̯ašḫa festival. Not complete. When the king goes to Arinna for the nuntarrii̯ašḫa festival. This is a clear/faultless tablet. It is arranged according to the wooden tablet."

CTH 628 The Hittite (ḫ)išu̯a festival.[10]

KBo XV 37+FHG 9+ĀBoT 7 rev. vi[11]

3   [DUB XI]II[12] ᴷᴬᴹ

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10   For further information on the (ḫ)išu̯a festival see M. Salvini / I. Wegner, "Die hethitisch-hurritischen Rituale des (ḫ)išuwa-Festes", *SMEA* 24 (1984) 175-185; A.M. Dinçol, "Ein hurro-hethitisches Festritual: (ḫ)išuwaš. I", *Belleten* 53/206 (1989) 1-50; I. Wegner / M. Salvini, *Die hethitisch-hurritischen Ritualtafeln des (ḫ)išu̯a-Festes* (ChS I/4), Roma 1991; C. Karasu, "(h)išu̯a Bayramı kolofonları üzerine bazı düşünceler", in: H. Otten, E. Akurgal, H. Ertem, A. Süel (eds.), *Sedat Alp'a Armağan / Festschrift für Sedat Alp. Hittite and Other Anatolian and Near Eastern Studies in Honour of Sedat Alp*, Ankara 1992, 335-339.

11   Restorations according to KBo XV 52 vi 39'-45'.

12   Restorations according to Salvini / Wegner, *SMEA* 24, 182 n. 21.

4   [ŠA EZEN₄ ḫ]i-šu-u̯a-a-aš QA-TI
5   [MUNUS.LUGAL ᶠPu-du-ḫé-pa-aš-kán ku-u̯a-pí]
6   [ᵐUR.MAḪ.LÚ-in GAL DUB.SAR]ᴹᴱˢ
7   [ᵁᴿᵁḪa-at-tu-ši A-NA ṬUP-PAᴴᴵ·ᴬ]
8   [ᵁᴿᵁKi-iz-zu-u̯a-at-na ša-an-ḫu-u̯a-an-zi]
9   [ú-e-ri-i̯a-at na-aš-ta ke-e ṬUP-PAᴴᴵ·ᴬ]
10   [ŠA EZEN₄ ḫi-šu-u̯a-a-aš a-pí-i̯a UD-a]t
11   [ar-ḫa a-ni-i̯a-at]
12   [ŠU ᵐTal-mi]¹³-ᴰIM-ub
13   [DUMU] ᵐUR.MAḪ.LÚ GAL DUB.SARᴹᴱˢ
14   [DUMU.DUM]U-ŠU ŠA ᵐMi-it-ta-an-na-mu-u-u̯a
15   GÁB.ZU.ZU ŠA ᵐMAḪ.DINGIRᴹᴱˢ-na
16   PA-NI ᵐUR.MAḪ.LÚ GAL DUB.SARᴹᴱˢ
17   IŠ-ṬUR

"[The thirt]eenth [tablet of the ḫišuu̯a [festival. Complete. When queen Puduhepa assigned U̯alu̯a-ziti, the head of the scribe]s, [to investigate the Kizzuu̯atna tablets at Ḫattuša. Later on, on the same day he made these tablets of the ḫišuu̯a festival. Hand of Talmi]-Tešub, [son of] U̯alu̯a-ziti, the head of the scribes, [grandso]n of Mittannamuu̯a, student/apprentice of MAḪ.DINGIRᴹᴱˢ-na, wrote it, in the presence of U̯alu̯a-ziti, the head of the scribes."

Hittite colophons checked against the list of elements of Mesopotamian colophons display the following characteristics:

1) The principle of catch-lines for easy identification of the sequence of tablets is unknown.

2) The number of the tablet within its series is most frequently encountered. The usual format is the same as in Mesopotamian tablets: DUB nᴷᴬᴹ (seldom DUB nᴾᵁ and in the catalogue tablets also DUB nᴾᶦ ¹⁴). The catalogue tablets often list the series of tablets as "n DUB/ṬUP-PU /IM.GÍD.DA"; in some cases ṬUP-PA, ṬUP-PÍ ŠA, (I) IM.GÍD.DA occur. In colophons the tablet sometimes is referred to by a Hittite deictic pronoun: ke-ˈeˈ[-da-n]i-kán ṬUP-PÍ KBo II 7 left edge; ke-e-da-ni-ša-an A-NA ṬUP-PÍ KBo II 13 rev. 10. Labels usually omit the number of tablets of a series and prefer the formula "ṬUP-PAᴴᴵ·ᴬ (ŠA) …".

As in Mesopotamian tablets it is stated whether a tablet is followed by another one or not (QA-TI or Ú-UL QA-TI "is (not) finished" Akk. stative;

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¹³ Restoration according to KBo XXXV 260, left edge 1: ŠU ᵐTal-m[i-ᴰU-ub; see also L.M. Mascheroni, "Scribi hurriti a Boğazköy: Una verifica prosopografica", SMEA 24 (1984) 163, Nr. 16.

¹⁴ V. Haas / I. Wegner, "Hethitologische Notizen", AoF 28 (2001) 121 f., have argued that the writing DUB n-PÍ is a misinterpretation of an Assyrian form of DUB with more than one vertical wedge at the end.

Sum.: TIL.LA, NU.TIL, NU.AL-TI/TIL).

3) The title of a composition is regularly mentioned in the colophon. As in Mesopotamia, it may be the opening phrase of the composition or, more often than in Mesopotamia, a title like ... ŠA EZEN₄ KI.LAM "(nth tablet) of the KI.LAM festival" or ŠA ᵐŠuppiluliuma LUGAL.GAL UR.SAG LÚ-nannaš "(nth tablet) of the res gestae of Šuppiluliuma, the Great King, the Hero".

4) Contrary to Mesopotamian tablets, the number of lines on the tablet is usually not mentioned.[15]

5) Concerning the procedure by which the tablet was written, there are frequent references to the head scribe in whose presence (PANI PN), i.e. under whose supervision or according to whose dictation, the tablet was written.

6) Colophons of tablets containing the text of rituals sometimes refer to "wooden tablets" as a source. In some Hittite festival rituals the phrase ANA GIŠ.ḪUR-kan ḫandan "it is arranged according to a wooden tablet" is found.[16] According to the colophons of the išuua-festival queen Puduhepa ordered the head scribe UR.MAḪ.LÚ to search for tablets from Kizzuwatna in order to copy them or compile a new version of the ritual.[17] The colophons of some tablets containing the Hurrian itkalzi-ritual refer to tablets from Šapinuua, which, according to a royal command, were copied during harvest time.[18]

7) The name of the scribe is often mentioned in the colophons of tablets from Ḫattuša.

8) The name of the owner of the tablet is never mentioned; the place of storage of a tablet, however, or the place the tablet refers to, is occasionally stated (TUP-PU ᵁᴿᵁḪa-at-ti "tablet (of) Ḫatti", or more exactly "tablet (of) Ḫattuša" is mentioned in some festival texts).[19]

9) The client who ordered a tablet is seldom mentioned; see, however, sub 6).

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[15] See, however, the fragment of the Hurrian omen collection KBo XXXII 223 from the Middle Hittite period, which at the end of col. iii gives the sum of the omens; G. Wilhelm, "Eine hurritische Sammlung von danānu-Omina aus Ḫattusa", ZA 77 (1987) 229-238, esp. 231 with fn. 2.

[16] CHD P, 166a: "collated against the wooden tablet".

[17] M. Salvini / I. Wegner, Die hethitisch-hurritischen Rituale des AZU-Priesters. Teil 1 (Die Texte) (ChS I/2), Roma 1986, 4; Karasu, in: Fs. Sedat Alp, 335-339.

[18] V. Haas, Die Serien itkaḫi und itkalzi des AZU-Priesters, Rituale für Tašmišarri und Tatuḫepa sowie weitere Texte mit Bezug auf Tašmišarri (ChS I/1), Roma 1984, 2.

[19] H. Otten, Ein hethitisches Festritual (KBo XIX 128) (StBoT 13), Wiesbaden 1971, 48-49 fn. 106; E. Neu / C. Rüster, Hethitische Keilschrift-Paläographie II (StBoT 21), Wiesbaden 1975, 12 ("Tafel (aus) Ḫattuša").

10) The supervisor under whom the copy was made is regularly named. His title is usually written with the logogram (^{LÚ})SAG "chief (scribe)" or GAL DUB.SAR$^{(MEŠ)}$ "the head scribe/the head of the scribes". Supervisors whose title is not mentioned also occur in a few colophons.

11) The purpose of the copy is usually not stated. There are examples, however, in which the colophon refers to damaged tablets as a source for a fresh copy.[20] A copy might be prepared as a faultless "final draft" (*ki-i pár-ku-i ṬUP-PU* KUB II 9 vi 9).[21] Apart from this, the expressions EGIR-*an tarnummaš*, *ištarniiaš* EGIR-*an tarnummaš*[22] and probably *para tarnummaš* were analysed by us as warning notes, written by scribes to each other while transferring the text from the wooden tablet on to the clay tablet.[23]

12-14) Neither wishes of the scribe concerning his own fate or the future treatment of his tablet, nor curses, blessings or invocations occur in Hittite colophons. Since there is no dating system in Hittite texts at all it goes without saying that also colophons do not give a date.

15) The disposition of the tablet is usually not referred to; see, however, the term IM.GÍD.DA "long tablet" in the catalogue tablets referred to above *sub* 2.

In conclusion, it can be stated that the Hittite colophons share a number of features with the Mesopotamian ones; the typical features of the extensive colophons of the 1st millennium, however, do not occur. Though taking part in the general scribal practices of the Ancient Near East, the Hittite scribes make rather free use of the tradition and supply information they feel necessary in their own wording.

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[20] Cf. above, KUB XIII 7 rev. iv (CTH 258: Instructions of Tudḫaliia I/II).

[21] Cf. A. Goetze, *JCS* 2 (1948) 231 ("This is a final copy"); Otten, StBoT 13, 48 ("dies ist eine Reinschrift"); I. Singer, *The Hittite KI.LAM Festival (Part One)* (StBoT 27), Wiesbaden 1983, 4 ("this is a final (literally genuine) copy"); *CHD* P, 166a ("final draft", lit. "pure tablet, one free of errors, corrected").

[22] These expressions were discussed by Mascheroni, *Hethitica* 5, 95-109, and Singer, StBoT 27, 40-42 and P.H.J. Houwink ten Cate, "Brief Comments on the Hittite Cult Calendar", in: E. Neu / Ch. Rüster (Hg.), *Documentum Asiae Minoris Antiquae. Festschrift für H. Otten*, Wiesbaden 1988, 187 n. 41; for our suggestion for the completion of KBo II 7 l.e. 2 *tar-nu-u-u[m-ma-aš]* cf. C.W. Carter, *Hittite Cult-Inventories* (diss. University of Chicago 1962) 95 and 196-197.

[23] C. Karasu, "Hitit Kâtipleri Üzerine Bazı Düşünceler", *Uluslararası I. Hititoloji Kongresi Bildirileri (Çorum 19-21 Temmuz 1990)*, Ankara [1992] 227-228; "Some Considerations on Hittite Scribes", *ArAnat* 1 (1995) 121.