HITTITE HIEROGLYPHIC "all, every, whole"

by

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The bilingues unearthed at the Karatepe (Ceyhan) last year enable us for the first time in the Hittite hieroglyphic research to read without hesitation most of the phonetic signs and to identify a number of words written phonetically in plene and in ideograms. Apart from the values of the commonest syllabic signs and the signification of some few ideograms and plene writings kindred with the cuneiform Hittite, almost nothing was known to us of this language.

The first attempts to fix this language as Hittite and to decipher it date back to W. Wright (1874) and A. H. Sayce (1876). It is surprising with how much sagacity and tenacity scholars have since then extracted from the rather scanty material those few geographic, personal and deity names familiar to us from Assyrian and other antique sources. Only since 1931 with the extensive researches of Bossert, Gelb, Hrozný and Meriggi an end was put to the etymological experiments which had grown so fantastic in the intervening period. They arrived independently at a tolerable uniformity in the reading of the most current syllabic signs. The grammatical analysis of some hieroglyphic texts considerably advanced the researches. Further progress was made by Meriggi with the specification of the signs for relationship, so important for genealogies, and the new readings by Bossert of the deity names Kupapa and Hepat together with the king's name Urballâ, which for years was misread Syennesis. Hrozný and Meriggi gave rather premature attempts of translation of almost all the texts. Apart from solitary results with regard to grammar and reading, the bulk of the vocabulary is useless. Uniformity in the transcription of the syllabic signs we owe to Gelb, who with his
syllabic theory ¹ established a syllabary of some fifty-seven phonetic signs consisting only of consonants plus vowel, and vowels alone.

The present study is concerned with the reading of the Hittite ideographic sign Mer. No. 61 ², whose signification has been illustrated by the Karatepe inscriptions. In the Phoenician text of the bilinguals we find in its place 'ḥāl', which with varied vocalisation in the Arabic of to-day as in other Semitic languages as well means "entirety, i.e. all, every, whole". A differentiation by the article for "whole" and the definite plural for "all" does not occur in this text. In the Hittite hieroglyphic text (abbr.: hh) however an indication for 'whole' (with article — here demonstrative pron.) could perhaps be deduced from the text f III 22, for 'every' (without article — here demonstrative pron., sing.) from A 6:3 and for 'all' (pl.) from A 6:6. As no unanimity has yet been reached on the endings of the hh declension, this problem must be dealt with in the future. Almost all our definitions of the case-endings given below depend on the works of the above-mentioned scholars.

The hh ideogram is always complemented with 'ma/efi'. Sometimes additional case and pronominal endings and particles follow. Agreement conforms with the generally following substantive. In the appended table are given all instances, which occur with this ideogram, known to me. At first sight it strikes us as strange that about half of them concern the inscriptions from Karatepe, while e.g. in the rather numerous and long texts of Charchemish this ideogram does not appear at all. Therefore, as a word for 'all, every, whole' is to be expected in longer texts of an historical or related character, you have to assume that in this case the ideogram is replaced by phonetic writing. The examination of the Karatepe text shows our ideogram several times with those for 'king' or deity names. A perusal of the other texts reveal two instances where a phonetic writing ending in like manner with 'ma/efi' precedes the ideogram for 'king' or deity names (cf. table No. 24, 25). It is 'd/ta-na-ma', the root being conse-