“gentile times”, mentioned by Jesus in Luke 21:24, began; thus Adventists in the nineteenth century. They lasted 2,520 years according to J.A. Brown’s calculations (in 1823) and ended in 1914 AD. When positing the Jewish return from exile in 537 BC and when taking seriously Jeremiah’s prophecy that the exile was to last seventy years (Jer. 29:10), one arrives at 607 BC. The author adds many ancient sources to show that 607 is impossible. Important is the cuneiform evidence which is studied in much detail in the chapters on the length of reigns of the Neo-Babylonian kings (Chapter 3) and the absolute chronology of the Neo-Babylonian era (Chapter 4) (p. 89-190).

The two oldest astronomical diaries give a firm basis for the absolute chronology (p. 84 f., 157-168); texts on lunar eclipses are studied (LBAT 1417, 1419-1421). Historical texts like chronicles, king lists and royal inscriptions (Nabonidus) are scrutinized; and the many dated Neo-Babylonian documents. Contemporaneous Egyptian chronology is added (p. 139-147). The appendix on this chapter comments on scribal errors in Babylonian texts. Here, collations made by C.B.F. Walker are presented and the overlaps of the reigns are investigated (p. 321-329, cf. 129-136). The author corresponded with a number of Assyriologists and gives their opinions (H. Hunger, A.J. Sachs, C.B.F. Walker, D.J. Wiseman).

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This book is the English translation of the original German Hethitisches Übungsbuch (= Dresdner Beiträge zur Hethitologie 9). It is intended as “a practical exercise book […] for Hittite classes”, treating “those parts of grammar which have proven to be the most problematic for the translation of texts” (p. V).

The book contains about 30 chapters that each treat certain aspects of Hittite grammar, like ‘u-stems’, ‘Present active’, ‘Personal pronouns’ or ‘Relative clauses’. Each chapter consists of a small introduction to the subject (often no more than a schematic overview of endings), and several sample sentences that function as an illustration to the specific matter. The sentences are taken from many different Hittite texts, and of each sentence a reference to its attestation place is given. In total, the book contains 924 sample sentences and translations) of each one of them can be found at the back of the book (p. 140-206) where we also find an alphabetic glossary (p. 207-300) containing all words that occur in the sentences. With this wealth of material the Hittite Exercise Book will certainly be a helpful tool to any teacher who easily wants to find examples of certain grammatical elements of Hittite. The question is, however, whether this book is a book with which students will be able to learn Hittite. I am afraid that this is not the case: to my taste the book is too un-linguistic.

Hittite is known from texts that date from about 1600-1180 BC. Within these four centuries Hittite, like any living language, underwent (sometimes drastic) linguistic changes: it is clear that the language from the oldest texts is quite different from the language attested in the youngest texts. Within Hittitology, it is therefore common to distinguish between an Old-Hittite (OH) and a Neo-Hittite (NH) language stage. Nevertheless, Zeilfelder has chosen to largely ignore these different stages in her book, claiming that “the restriction to “old” and “young” forms of speech […] is still disputed” and that “a synchronous approach seems more tenable and reasonable” (p. 6). Just as one cannot treat the language of Shakespeare and modern-day English as one and the same linguistic stage of which a “synchronous” grammar could be written, any student who wants to learn Hittite should be clearly explained the differences between the OH and the NH linguistic stages.

The Hittite syllabary contains several signs that are ambiguous regarding their vowel: they can be read with either e or i: e.g. the sign BI can be read pê as well as pê; the sign IR can be read ir as well as or; etc. In the beginning of Hittitology this has led to the idea that the vowels *e and *i are merging throughout the Hittite period. Melchert (1984: 78-156) has meticulously shown that this is not the case, however, and that e and i are distinct phonemes at all stages of Hittite. This means that in most cases in which a sign is used that is ambiguous regarding its vowel, there are linguistic arguments to transliterate either e or i. Zeilfelder states that because “an actual sound change e > i cannot be ruled out […] the “neutral” reading with i- has been chosen throughout this exercise book”. Apart from the fact that there is no such thing as a “neutral” reading of a sign3), this leads to unnecessary complications in situations. For instance, on p. 66 the 3pl.pret.act.-ending -er is illustrated by the forms sa-al-la-nu-us-kir, pa-a-ir, da-i-ir, ku-en-nir, e-š-e-ir, ti-i-e-ir and e-ku-ir, which on the basis of linguistic knowledge should have been transliterated sa-al-lal-na-us-kar, pa-a-er, da-i-er, ku-en-ner, e-š-e-er, ti-i-e-er and e-ku-er. Similarly on p. 76, where the 2pl.imp.act.-ending -ten is illustrated by the forms e-ip-tin, ū-wa-te-it-tin, e-š-tin and pa-ah-ša-tin, which in fact should be transliterated e-ep-tén, ū-wa-te-et-tén, e-š-tén and pa-ah-ša-tén.

All sample sentences are given in transliteration, but the first 90 sentences (p. 9-22) are accompanied by a sort of bound transcription. The status of this transcription is unclear, however, and Zeilfelder does not account for it. She seems

2) For the problematic status of a Middle Hittite (MH) language stage, cf. Melchert ffhc.

3) Just as one cannot state that the sign RI/TAL, which can be read ri as well as ta, has a “neutral” reading — one must always explicitly choose for either transliterating ri or transliterating ta, a choice that is based on linguistic knowledge —, the readings pê and pê of e.g. the sign BI are both equally possible and therefore equally neutral: one must choose one of them on the basis of linguistic knowledge.
to have tried to give a semi-phonetic rendering of the sentences, which is apparent from the fact that she represents geminate spelled stops with voiceless stops and single spelled stops with voiced stops (e.g. ur-tar becomes “utar” and wa-tar-na-ah-hu-u-in “wadamannahun”), sometimes writes clusters where graphic vowels are written (pá rz-as-ta becomes “parsta”) and translates’ sumero- and akkadograms into Hit-+ite (e.g. INIMMES becomes “utar”). The result is inconsistent and does not meet up to academic standards. For instance, sentence 5, nu ne-ku-uz me-e-hu-u-ni hu-u-da-a-ak GAM pa-it-tin is transcribed “nu neguz měhůnů hůdáč kátá paitín”, which is neither a scholarly bound transcription (which could have been e.g. /nu neg“t mehoni Hodak kala paiten/) nor a real phonological interpretation (which would have been /nu neg“t me-e-hu-u-ni h-u-da-ak/). Apart from these three unfortunate choices, the book contains several inadequate or plainly incorrect pieces of information. I have therefore made a list of additions and corrections. For the “history and cultural history of the Hittites” Zeilfelder refers to Goetze 1957, whereas e.g. Bryce 1998 and Bryce 2004 are more up-to-date. It is unfortunate to use ḫispand- / ḫispand- ‘to libate’ < “spend” as an example of an initial consonant cluster that has been broken up by a graphical vowel because this is exactly the only case whose interpretation is unclear. The word eštar does not mean ‘blood’ and therefore cannot be used as an argument in favour of loss of -h in eštar ‘blood’. The explanation of IBO perhaps as “Istanbul Boğazköy tabletterind” and ABO as “Ankara Boğazköy textlerind” is incorrect: IBO is the abbreviation of “Istanbul Arkeoloji Müzesinde Bulunan Boğazköy Tabletleri”; ABO stands for “Ankara Arkeoloji Müzesinde Bulunan Boğazköy Tabletleri”. It is stated that “a-stems [are] always commene”. This is incorrect, cf. e.g. peda- (n.) ‘place’, etc. TI-BAT: read ḫIS-BAT. neku is not nom.sg.c., but an archaic gen.sg. On diphthongal stems see especially Weitenberg 1978. The endings -hi, -ti, teni and -tani are in fact -hhi, -tti, -tteni and -tani. For the original 2pl.pres.act.-ending of the hi-conjugation -stenuity see Kloekhorst 2004, p. go e-r. Note 31 is incorrect: the form pariyā is 3sg.pres.midd., showing the ending -a. I do not understand why sentence 261 is used as an example: it contains the form ú-wa-a-mi, which is fully aberrant within the paradigm of úwa- ‘to come’: this spelling occurs only once, whereas the normal spelling ú-wa-mi occurs dozens of times. The endings -ha, -hari, -ta, -tati and -tari are in fact -hha, -hhari, -tta, -ttati and -ttari. The distinction made between a mi- and a hi-conjugation within the endings of the medium is incorrect: although the middle paradigm indeed has disposition over two sets of 3sg.-endings, namely -a / -ari vs. -tta / -ttari, the choice of a certain verb to use one of these sets has nothing to do with whether this verb uses the mi- or the hi-conjugation in its active inflection. The representation of the endings of the preterite active is far from perfect. (1) -hun, -ta and -ten are in fact -hhun, -atta and -ttata (2) It should be made clear that the 3sg.pret.act.-endings of the mi-conjugation “-t”, “-tta” are in complementary distribution, namely ?v-t as ?c-ta. (3) The 2sg.pret.act.-endings of both the mi- and the hi-conjugation as well as the 3sg.pret.act.-ending of the hi-conjugation need a diachronic presentation. The 3sg.pret.act.-ending of the mi-conjugation is °-s in the oldest texts. Again, due to phonotactic reasons, this ending is being replaced by its hi-variant -tta from the OH period onwards. The occasional NH 2sg.pret.act.-forms that have an ending -e are due to a very late merger of 2sg.- and 3sg.-forms. The 2sg.pret.act.-ending of the hi-conjugation is °-ttata throughout the Hittite period. Only in a very few cases in late texts the endings °-s and °-sta are used in this function due to a merger between 2sg.- and 3sg.-forms. (4) The original hi-ending of 2pl.pret.act. is °-sten, for which see Kloekhorst 2004, p. 68. The endings -holat, hati, -tat and -ttat are in fact -hhat, -hhati, -hhati, -hhati, -tta and -ttati. Same remark as for p. 54: there is no “mi- and hi-conjugation” difference in the medium paradigm. The form e-hu ‘come!’ is falsely given as an example of a 3sg.imp.act.-form of the hi-conjugation in -u. The form in fact is 2sg.imp.act. and reflects *h₁i-ë- hou, litt. ‘go hither!’ The endings -haru, -hut and -tut are in fact -hharu, -hurrut and -ttutu. The ending -hharu should be added in the overview (cf. the examples ú-wa-ah-ha-ru and za-ah-hi-ya-ah-ha-ru given on the same page). The form in fact is 2sg.imp.act. and reflects *h₁i-ë-hou, litt. ‘go hither!’ The representation of the ablauting verbs is far too simplistic. I would at least have expected Zeilfelder to explain that mi-verbs originally show an ablaut e/a (e.g. epte / apanzi), whereas (some) hi-verbs show an ablaut a/e (e.g. ašši / aššani, so exactly opposite). Moreover, there is no mention of the fact that in OH texts the strong stem of hi-verbs is consistently spelled with plene -a (šakkí, ārhi, etc.). The representation of verbs like dai-i / ti- ‘to put’ and pai-i / pi- ‘to give’ as having an ablaut “d:ei” is fully incorrect. The original ablaut was -ai-: -i-, of which the diphthong -ai- monophthongizes to -e- in
front of -h- (note that the spelling pithhi is incorrect in view of spellings like pith-eh-hi that clearly show that spellings like Pith-PE-HI/EH-hi, which Zeilfelder apparently reads as pit-ih-hi, should be read pit-eh-hi = pehhi). It should be noted that -a- is not original in these verbs: it spread from MH times onwards out of 3sg.pres.act.-forms like dāi and pāi where it is the result of the contraction of *dai-i and *pāi-i.

The 'dative'-suffix *annāni- should be cited as *annāni-i / *annāni-. The 'finitive'-suffix *ēsī- in fact is *ēsīsī-

The particle *pat does not "only occur at the end of a word (including verb forms) that need emphasis.

The particle *pat does not "only occur at the end of a nominal phrase". It can be attached to every word (including verb forms) that need emphasis.

All in all, the Hittite Exercise Book will serve as a very convenient tool for every teacher of Hittite, in which sample sentences for different aspects of Hittite grammar can easily be found, but personally I would not recommend this book to my students: it is too unscholarly and confusing and contains too many mistakes.

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OUDE TESTAMENT


This is a revised edition of The Earth and the Waters. A Linguistic Investigation. Sheffield Academic Press, Sheffield, 1989 (JSOT Suppl. 83), which was revised in BtOr 52 (1995), 107-109. Whereas Tsumura restricted his evaluation of Gunkel’s Chaoskampf theory in his 1989 monograph to a discussion of the interpretation of Genesis 1-2 against the background of ancient Near Eastern mythology, he has now followed the suggestion of one of the reviewers, J.C.L. Gibson, to add a discussion of the function of waters and flood in biblical poetry. In this second part, which takes a good quarter of the total length, he investigates the alleged influence of especially Ugaritic conceptions on Psalms 18, 29, 46 and Habakkuk 3.

In the first part of the book Tsumura has — compared to the edition of 1989 — rephrased some statements, slightly reordered the chapters (making it more easy to follow his reasoning by offering more translations of the ancient texts and recapitulations of his arguments) and added references to recent secondary literature. In some cases he also takes up the discussion, for instance on p. 86, n. 5 about the in view wrong translation of Hebrew ‘ed with ‘dew’. In other cases he merely mentions of some of the many studies that have been published in this field since 1990. Some of these certainly deserved more attention. Tsumura refers to the article on Tiamat by B. Alster in the Dictionary of Deities and Demons (citing from the first edition of 1995 and not from the extensively revised edition of 1999). He reckon’s Alster to his supporters by quoting his statement that “the parallels are not sufficiently specific to warrant the conclusion that Enuma Elish was the source of the biblical account" (p. 53). However, Tsumura fails to note that — opposed to his own theories — Alster sees many parallels between the Mesopotamian and Biblical accounts of creation and also remarks that Hebrew tehom is translated ‘the deep’ and is etymologically related to Akkadian tiamat (DDD, 2nd ed., p. 867). One would have expected at least some kind of criticism by Tsumura on this opinion ventured in a recent authoritative handbook.

The most important thing Tsumura added in the first part of his monograph is a short and compared to the rest of the book rather superficial discussion of the exegetical problems of ruach elohim in Genesis 1:2 (pp. 74-76). His conclusions, primarily on etymological and linguistic grounds, remain the