NOTES ON RECENT DISCOVERIES AT TELL MARDIKH-EBLA

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After a survey of the Aleppo region in the autumn of 1963 the Italian Archaeological Expedition in Syria has concentrated its efforts on Tell Mardikh, approx. 70 km south of Aleppo. The results have been published in extensive preliminary reports.[1] In 1974, an archive of 42 tablets was found in an EB IV stratum (2300—2200 B. C.),[2] and in 1975, royal archives from the same period were discovered, containing nearly 15,000 tablets.[3] The archives include administrative and commercial, historical, literary and lexical texts among the latter are bilingual Sumero-Eblaite vocabularies. Pettinato [1975: 374 n. 107] neatly summarizes the results in the following points: 1) Tell Mardikh can be positively identified with Ebla; 2) Mari was at this period under Eblaite domination; 3) the language of Ebla belongs to the North-Western group of Semitic languages and is defined as Old Canaanite, a parallel to the Old Akkadian of the North-Eastern Semitic group.

As this discovery opens a new chapter in comparative philology on the one hand and in the history of Ancient Near East on the other, a brief historical and linguistic outline should serve those interested in related fields.

The archives of Ebla have greatly changed our knowledge of Syro-Palestine in the 3rd millenium B. C.[4] This was not an area of nomadic tribes but a great and well organized power. Ebla exerted a strong influence over a wide area; it controlled Kanish (a vassal treaty is preserved), Charchemish, Alalakh, Hazor, Lachish, Megiddo, Gaza, Ashtarot, Japha and allegedly Sinai. Of course, the reading of some signs is still uncertain; for example, it is doubtful whether Sinai is really mentioned in the texts[5] as the name Sinai appears in younger books of the Old Testament, i. e. the Yahwist (J) and Priestly (P) strata of the Pentateuch while in the Elohist (E) stratum and Deuteronomic (D) literature the name Horeb was used. Nevertheless, the overall picture of Eblaite dominions will probably remain the same.

The following list of kings is now known:

Igriš-halam
Ar-ennum

Ebrum
Ibbi-sipiš
Dubuhu-ada
Irkab-damu

One of the documents mentions a war with Iblun-il of Mari who flees to Haššum and Ebrum makes his son king of Mari.

During the period of the Dynasty of Agade (2370—2190 B. C.) which corresponds to the archaeological horizon EB IV Ebla yields its power to Agade. According to Pettinato [1976] its mercenary army could not match the Akkadian forces.

This point marks the beginning of the history of Ebla based on external evidence. The inscription of Sargon of Agade states: "Sargon, the king, prostrated (himself) in prayer before the god Dagan in Tutul (and) he gave (him) the Upper Region (i. e.) Mari, Iarmuti (and) Ebla as far as the Cedar Forest and the Silver Mountain".[6]

The destruction of the royal palace at Ebla can be attributed to the conquest of Naram-Sin: "Although since the era of the creation (?) of man (kind) none of the kings has ever destroyed (the towns) Arman and Ebla, now the god Nergal did open up the path for the mighty Naram-Sin, and gave him Arman and Ebla, and he presented him (also) with the Amanus, the Cedar Mountain and (with) the Upper Sea. And mighty Naram-Sin slew Arman and Ebla with the weapon of the god Dagan who aggrandizes his kingdom".[7]

The royal palace was abandoned after the conquest and over it a monumental staircase of the EB IV B period was built but the town continued to play an important role well into the 2nd millennium B. C. A clear example of this continuity is the uninterrupted existence of the temple N from 2300 B. C. until 1700/1600 B. C.[8]

During the Ur III period, Ebla is mentioned as an exporter of wood to Lagash and appears in connection with Uršu.[9] Later it appears in Cappadocian texts,[10] in administrative texts of Alalakh VII,[11] and in the Hittite historical text CTH 14, in connection with Haššum, Halpa and Uršu [KUB XL 4, 6]. Finally, one ought to list texts from Alalakh IV,[12] the Thutmose III's list of Karnak[13] and the Hurrian text from Bogazköy, Bo 409; the latter is the only document whose spelling uruE-eb-la-a-pa indicates the reading Ebla, not Ibla.[14] The presence of Ebla in a middle-Assyrian letter [Gelb 1935: 4 n. 35] is uncertain.

The site Tell Mardikh was positively identified with the old Ebla by Matthiae [1970: 68 ff.; id. 1971: 60 f.].

For the philologist the excitement lies in the discovery of a new language, which has been termed Old Canaanite.

The classification and nomenclature of Semitic languages has always been a problem.[15] After several decades of indiscriminate use of the terms "Canaanite" and "Amorite" with further determinatives such as "East", "Old" etc., scholars seemed to have settled for the name "Amorite" describing the language and culture of early West-Semitic peoples in Syro-Palestine.[16] It is not without irony that Pettinato has now resurrected the term "Canaanite"

after Gelb [1961 : 47] had set a tombstone over it. So far, there are no definite criteria for the classification of individual languages, a problem which may root in the complicated cross-group pattern of lexical and morphological iso-glosses.[17] But the name itself is, after all, irrelevant; for the Indo-European Anatolian group names like "Hittite" itself are wrong but serve their purpose as long as they are used consistently. One can only hope that agreement will be reached now on which term to employ.

[1] *MAIS* I, 1965; II, 1966; III, 1967.

[2] Pettinato 1975:363.

[3] Pettinato 1975:374 n. 107; id. 1976.

[4] All data for the pre-Sargonic period are from *Pettinato* 1976.

[5] This was pointed out by A. Kempinski.

[6] *ANET*[3] 1969:268; Hirsch 1963:38.

[7] *ANET*[3] 1969:268; Hirsch: 73 f.

[8] Matthiae 1975:356.

[9] Edzard-Farber 1974:39; MAIS I, 121 n. 45; Kupper 1949:85 f.; cf. Klengel 1965:259 f.

[10] Stephens 1944, Nr. 193:14; Lewy 1945:180; Astour 1971:13. Kienast 1960, Nr. 32:17—22, cf. Liverani 1973:108 and n. 27.

[11] *AT* 18:2, 35:10, 269:3, 373:5, 377:4; cf. Klengel 1965:261.

[12] *AT* 180:36, 182:5.

[13] Helck 1971:147.

[14] Weidner 1952-53:13 n. 87; Goetze 1953:103 n. 1.

[15] Greenfield 1969; Sekine 1973; Hetzron 1974.

[16] von Soden 1960:191; Gelb 1961:46 f.; Kenyon 1966:76.

[17] Rabin 1963:107 ff.

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Lothar Eckhart: *Die Skulpturen des Stadtgebietes von Lauriacum.* Corpus signorum imperii Romani. Österreich III, 2. Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften. Wien, 1976, veliki 8⁰, 84 str., 49 tabel.

Mednarodna zveza za klasično arheologijo (*Association internationale d'Archéologie Classique*) s sedežem v Rimu si je pred leti zastavila nalogo organizirati izdajanje mednarodnega dela »Corpus signorum imperii Romani«, kjer naj bi bila objavljena in obdelana vsa rimska plastika v okviru modernih držav in nekdanjih rimskih provinc oziroma mestnih območij. V tej seriji je doslej izšlo:

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I, 1 E. J. Phillips, *Handrian's Wall, East of the North Tyme*, London-Oxford 1976.

V zvezku, ki naj bi ga tukaj predstavili, je obdelana rimska plastika Lauriaka, rimskega središča v današnji Zgornji Avstriji, zahodno od izliva reke Enns v Donavo, in njegovega širšega območja, ki na severu meji na Donavo, na vzhodu sega do Erlaufa na Nižjeavstrijskem, na jugu do pogorja Hochschwab in Eisenerških Alp, na zahodu pa mu teče meja po črti med rekami Enns, Steyr, Krems do reke Traun na severu in naprej do Donave. Lauriacum je bil utrdba za avksiliarne enote vse do Marka Avrelija, ko je postal sedež druge italske legije. Ob taboru se je začelo krepiti tudi civilno mesto, ki je dobilo mestne pravice za Karakale in je ostalo zadnje oporišče Rimljanov na Donavi.

Geografski opis Lauriaka, njegovo lego ter pomembnosti kakor tudi zgodovi-