HOMER AND EASTERN POETRY

The decipherment of the Mycenaean texts by Dr. Ventris has raised many problems for the student of Homer. One is the relation of a hypothetical written Mycenaean epic poetry to the theories of oral composition developed particularly by Parry. This paper arose from an attempt to use the Eastern poetic material, now conveniently available in the collection *Ancient Near Eastern Texts*[1], to try to suggest an answer to this question. The more I read these texts, the more I was struck by correspondences of subject matter with Homer, and so the further question arose whether these correspondences were due to recent borrowing in Ionia or to much earlier borrowing by Mycenaean poets. Two hints suggested the possibility of early rather than recent borrowing: the existence of Oriental loan words in the Mycenaean texts[2] and the recognition of allusions to Hittite history in Homer[3].

If we follow all the available clues, we must now believe in the existence of Mycenaean poets, who could have borrowed from contemporary Oriental poetry. This has long been a necessary assumption for the archaeologists, who had to account for Homer's knowledge of Mycenaean objects and techniques which were unlikely to have themselves survived; in some cases the tablets now confirm this argument by showing that the Mycenaean terminology for these objects also survived. The tablets also show certain institutions which are mentioned in Homer but are most unlikely to have remained in use after the Mycenaean age, e. g. the *wanax* and the *lawagetas* with their *temenos* (which shows that they were «honoured as gods by the people»), the royal households

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[1] Here abbreviated *NET*, edited by J. B. Pritchard, 2nd ed., Princeton 1955.

[2] E. g. Semitic: χιτών, χρυσός, ξίφος, Φοῖνιξ (and its derivatives), Luvian *a-ja-me-no*.

[3] C. M. Bowra, *Homer and his Forerunners*, Oxford 1955, p. 38, quotes *Iliad* 2, 856-7; 3, 184ff.; 6, 183ff.; *Odyssey* 11, 519ff.

with large numbers of female slaves, the princely gifts to strangers, the payment of some kind of feudal dues, the distinction between «settlers» and common land, and even the «slaves of god», whose name is recalled by «servants of Ares» (*Iliad* 2, 110, cf. 540)[1]. Furthermore the discovery on the tablets of many names which recur in mythology supports the suggestion made long ago by M. P. Nilsson on the basis of the archaeological remains that Greek mythology originated in Mycenaean sites. According to Miss Lorimer[2] «the great Aias seems to be a legendary figure of the remote past, the type of the perfect warrior as he was in the days when the body-shield held sway». Then the Aias who is named on a Knossos tablet (Np 973) will have been named after a hero who was already in poetry, and it is natural to suppose that Eteokles also was already a mythological figure when his sons were recorded in important positions in Pylos (Sn 64.15, An 654.8). Finally, the tablets show us formulae which can be paralleled in Homer (cf. PY An 519.15 with *Il.* 18, 234) and even metrical elements in the headings of their operation orders (e. g. PY An 1, An 35, KN Og 0467).

Following these clues, we can reasonably say that Mycenaean poetry sang[3] in dactylic or anapaestic rhythm of Mycenaean heroes at war and at peace, of their arms and equipment, their strategy and tactics, their institutions, their households, their furniture and their possessions. This poetry was roughly contemporary with the Old Babylonian, Hittite, and Ugarit texts published in *NET*. We may therefore now put two questions to these Eastern texts: first, what do they tell us about the relation of written to oral poetry, and secondly, do they show any elements which are likely to have come into the Greek poetic tradition in the Mycenaean age.

All this Eastern literature was written. The evidence therefore that it had any relation to oral poetry must come partly from form

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[1] Cf. L. R. Palmer, *Achaeans and Indo-Europeans*, Oxford 1955; my review in *Gnomon* XXVII (1955), p. 593 f. and my article in *Antiquity* 113 (1955), p. 10.

[2] *Homer and the Monuments*, London 1950, p. 182.

[3] «Sang» rather than «told», as lyres are known from the Mycenaean period (Lorimer, *op. cit.* p. 455f.), and spoken poetry is unknown until the time of rhapsodes.

and partly from colophons, notes about performance or recording added to the text. These colophons are worth examining:

1) *Egyptian. NET,* 25 «To the *ka* of the Scribe of the Treasury Qa-gabu. Done by the Scribe Inena, the master of this writing». Scribe is pupil of senior scribe; purely literary.

2) *Sumerian.* No colophons.

3) *Akkadian.*

a) We know that the Creation myth was recited on the fourth day of the New Year Festival (*NET,* 60); i. e. a religious text which would presumably be recited from the tablets with no deviations.

b) Colophon of Atrahasis epic (*NET,* 105). Written by Ellit-Aya in the eleventh year of Ammisaduqa about 1986.

c) Sultantepe colophons (from the temple library or writing school). «Faithfully copied by A, member of the Academy, under supervision of B, for the perusal of C, D, E.» Eighth century.

d) Assurbanipal's library at Nineveh (8th/7th century) «copied from an original at Assur, Babylon etc.»

e) Fragments of catalogue of Assurbanipal's library: two works noted as «from the mouth of X»[1].

This last alone steps outside a scribal tradition and suggests an oral poet.

4) *Hittite.*

a) Hurrian passages in Hittite texts are introduced by «the singer of the land of Hurri sings as follows».[2]

b) Opening of Kumarbi myth «Let there listen the gods who are in heaven» etc. (*NET,* 120). One tablet preserves the description «First tablet of the Song.[3]

c) Opening of the Song of Ullikummi «Of the father of all the gods, I will sing (*NET,* 121). The title «Song of Ullikummi» is given by the colophons of the first and second tablets.

d) Myth of Illuyankas, *NET,* 125 f. (i) «These are the words of Kellas, the anointed of the Storm-God of Nerik. What follows is

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[1] I owe my knowledge of c), d), e) to Dr. Gurney.

[2] O. R. Gurney, *The Hittites,* Melbourne 1952, p. 124.

[3] A. Lesky, *Saeculum* VI (1955), p. 40.

the cult legend of the Purulli (New Year) Festival of the Storm-God of Heaven, the version which they no longer tell». (iii) «This is the way in which they told it later... Thus it is found on the tablet. I have told the holy saga as it is found there».

e) Ritual against pestilence. *NET*, 347. «These are the words of Uhha-muwas, the Arzawa man. If people are dying in the country and if some enemy god has caused that, I act as follows:»

In these a) b) c) record the fixing of a song in writing; d) and e) the fixing of spoken words; d) is particularly interesting as recording two quite different versions.

5. *Phoenician.*

a) Ugarit 1375/50, *NET*, 135, poem about Baal. «Written by Elimelech. Donated by Niqmadd, King of Ugarit». Full form *NET*, 141: «Written by Elimelech the Shabnite. Dictated by Attani-puruleni, Chief of Priests, Chief of Temple-herdsmen. Donated by Niqmadd, King of Ugarit».

b) «Sanchuniathon of Beyrut took the record from Hierembalos, the Priest of Jewo, who gave the history to Abelbalos, King of Beyrut, and was accepted by him and his examiners.» Philo (ap. Müller, *FHG*, III p. 563). This is so like (a) that it is difficult to believe that it is not, as Philo says on the evidence of king lists, «earlier than the Trojan War».[1]

These texts come from temple libraries, palace libraries, or writing-schools. Clearly once the text is in any of these establishments it is fixed, whether it is recited at religious festivals or used to train scribes, who are needed for writing religious, political, legal, or commercial documents. The literate public was probably extremely small — priest and court, and there seems to be a complete divorce between the singer and the scribe.

The colophons (Assyrian, Hittite, Phoenician) give just enough evidence for oral poetry as distinct from recitations from fixed texts. The other evidence comes from the texts themselves and is of two kinds: i) repetitions of the kind that we find in Homer, ii) expansions and alterations of the text.

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[1] A. Lesky, *Saeculum* VI (1955), p. 44, cites the literature on this problem.

I. a) *Sumerian. NET,* 49f. «Then did the heart of Gilgamesh take pity on the Huwawa; he says to his servant Enkidu: 'O Enkidu, *let the caught bird go back to his place, let the caught man return to the bosom of his mother*'. Enkidu answers Gilgamesh: 'The tallest who has not judgment, Namtar will devour, Namtar who knows no distinctions. *If the caught bird goes back to its place, if the caught man returns to the bosom of his mother,* thou wilt not return to the city of the mother who gave birth to thee'».

b) *Akkadian. NET,* 81. «Gilgamesh opened his mouth to speak, saying to Enkidu: 'Up, my friend, let us *go to Egalmah, to the presence of Ninsun, the great Queen.* Ninsun, the wise, who is versed in all knowledge, will lend reasoned steps to our feet'. Grasping each other, hand in hand, Gilgamesh and Enkidu *go to Egalmah, to the presence of Ninsun, the great Queen*».

c) *Hittite. NET,* 121. «When Kumarbi wisdom into his mind had taken, from his chair he promptly rose. *Into his hand a staff he took, upon his feet as shoes* the swift wind *he put*». *NET,* 122. «O Mukushanu, my vizier, the word which I speak to thee — to me thine ear hold out. *Into thy hand a staffs take, upon thy feet the shoes put*».

d) *Ugaritic. NET,* 143f. The advice of El to Keret, 1.72 «*In a bowl of silver pour wine, honey in a bowl of gold. Go up to the top of a tower; bestride the top of the wall*», 1.164 «*In a bowl of silver he poured wine, honey in a bowl of gold. He went up to the top of a tower, bestrode the top of the wall*».

These are typical instances of repeated formulae for particular situations. Such repetitions are extremely common in all this literature; if repetitions are accepted as evidence that Homer is based on oral poetry, they must be evidence that these Eastern texts also were based on oral poetry. A striking instance is the recurrence of a seven-line description of Hell in two Akkadian poems, the Gilgamesh Epic and the descent of Ishtar.

It is reasonable to suppose that within the palace or temple, the texts whether read by a small priestly or royal public or recited at festivals or copied by scribes, remained fixed. The occurrence of expanded or altered versions of the same story in different places or in the same place at different times is evidence for an oral transmission outside the closed circle of the palace or temple where the text resided. Three of the Sumerian poems are known in later

expanded and altered forms. «Gilgamesh and the Land of the Living» (*NET*, 47) becomes the Gilgamesh Epic in Akkadian, which survives partly in a shorter Old Babylonian form and partly in a longer Assyrian form. The two Akkadian versions overlap sufficiently to show that the later version is considerably expanded from the earlier version. Comparison with the Sumerian version shows the same outlines; the friendship of Gilgamesh for Enkidu, the journey to the cedar forest, and the battle with Huwawa. But there has been considerable expansion at every point and new incidents are introduced including the story of the Flood and the Ark. This would seem to have been a separate Sumerian poem, of which an expanded version is found in the Akkadian Atrahasis epic, but in the Gilgamesh Epic it is introduced as an illustrative story and put into the mouth of the wise Utnapishtim: who is consulted by Gilgamesh about the possibility of attaining immortality. The Gilgamesh epic is also preserved in Hurrian and Hittite adaptations, but the remains are too fragmentary to quote. The third Sumerian poem which is known in Akkadian adaptation is the Descent of Inannah to the Nether world, which becomes in Akkadian the Descent of Ishtar.

We have already noticed Assyrian expanded versions of shorter Old Babylonian myths, and an expanded eighth / seventh century version of the fourteenth century (or earlier) myth of Nergal and Erishkigal has recently been found at Sultantepe. In many ways the most interesting of all the Akkadian myths is the Creation myth (*NET*, 60), which was recited on the fourth day of the New Year's festival. In the beginning there was neither heaven nor earth but Apsu (male fresh water) their begetter and mother Tiamat (female salt water), she who bore them all — all the gods including Anshar, his son Anu, and Anu's son Ea. Apsu quarrels with Tiamat, who objects to his plan for destroying the gods. Ea sees through the plan, puts Apsu to sleep and imprisons him. Ea then married Damkina and they had a son Marduk. The older gods then conspired with Tiamat against Marduk and she made monsters «the Viper, the Dragon, the Sphinx, the Great-Lion, the Mad-dog, and the Scorpion-Man, Mighty Lion-Demons, the Dragon-Fly, the Centaur». Ea then consulted with Anshar and Anu and Marduk. Marduk made a net to cover Tiamat and killed her and all her monsters. The poem ends with the glorification of Marduk. The

Hittite version of the Hurrian Creation myth (*NET*, 121) also has wars of successive generations of gods. Alalus is defeated by Anu and flees to the dark earth, Anu is defeated by Kumarbi and flees to heaven. But in the battle Kumarbi bit off Anu's genitals and this engendered the Storm god inside him. The Storm god evidently gets out and defeats Kumarbi. The story goes on in the Song of Ullikummi. Kumarbi produces a son, Ullikummi, a stone god, to avenge him. The Storm god made war on Ullikummi unsuccessfully. Ishtar tries to tempt the stone man with her charms (just as she tried to tempt Gilgamesh in the Gilgamesh epic). The Storm god then visits Ea, and Ea finally commands the older gods to produce «the ancient saw with which they cut Heaven and Earth apart», then he cuts through Ullikummi's legs and the Storm god attacks him again — this time no doubt successfully. Another Hittite myth (*NET*, 125) gives two versions of the battle between the Storm god and the dragon Illuyankas. The Phoenician version of the Creation myth is known from a translation by Philo of Byblos (2nd century A. D.); the colophon quoted above is so like the fourteenth century colophons on the Ras-Shamra tablets that it is difficult to believe that Philon's source Sanchuniathon lived much later. The text is extremely difficult; but it seems fairly clear 1) that Sanchuniathon started with a physical creation which proceded from Mist and Chaos (not unlike the Babylonian creation), 2) that then Sanchuniathon had a succession of divine rulers Eliun, Ouranos, El (whom Philo calls Kronos but whom a Ras-Shamra text identifies with Kumarbi), and the Storm god Demaros, who however succeeds peacefully. But before that Ouranos had quarrelled with his wife Ge and tried to kill his children, whom Ge helped against him. Kronos-El used his scribe Hermes to help him and he advised Kronos to make the iron Harpe, with which he later cut off the genitals of Ouranos.

The stories are clearly all connected since they have so many common elements and so many common names. A preliminary account of creation precedes the succession of rulers in the Akkadian and the Phoenician version. The successions of rulers correspond: Apsu-Ea-Marduk in Babylonia; Alalus-Anu-Kumarbi-Teshub in Hittite; Eliun-Ouranos-Kronos-Demaros in Phoenicia, but the last two have an extra generation. Incidents are repeated but not necessarily at the same place in the story. The quarrel of the origi-

nal Apsu and Tiamat in the Babylonian version becomes the quarrel of Ouranos and Ge in the next generation of the Phoenician story. The emasculation of Anu by Kumarbi becomes the emasculation of Ouranos by Kronos in the Phoenician story; but Kronos does his work with a special instrument like the special instrument used in the Hittite version to cut through Ullikummi's legs. The Storm god in the Hittite and the Phoenician version is the son of the last ruler but one.

As with the Gilgamesh Epic and other stories, the Creation myth is handled completely freely as it wanders from place to place, however fixed it may become when it is recorded in a particular centre and becomes part of local cult. Like the others it bears all the marks of oral poetry at each stage. The first question can therefore now be answered. All these poems were oral poems; they might be recorded in particular places for particular purposes; there they might be copied and recopied, but this did not in the least prevent oral transmission and with it expansion and alteration continuing. The essential difference from post-Homeric Greece seems to be that the poet did not himself write and the reading public was severely restricted.

The second question was whether there is any trace of Eastern poetry in Homer. Since the publication of the Hittite version there has been general agreement that it is reflected in Hesiod[1]. In Hesiod Ouranos is emasculated by Kronos (but with a special knife or sickle[2] as in the Phoenician poem), Kronos in his turn tries to do away with Zeus, Zeus defeats the Titans and buries them with Kronos and then meets Typhoeus, a last child of Gaia, and after his defeat establishes his rule. Without going into detail, it is clear that the succession of rulers which is the framework of Hesiod's *Theogony* does not reflect any one creation story which has come down to us. The preliminary creation of the world, like the emasculation of Kronos, has more connection with the Phoenician and Babylonian sources than with the Hittite, and Typhoeus is more

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[1] Cf. particularly R. D. Barnett, *Journal of Hell. Studies* LXV (1945), p. 100 ff. H. G. Güterbock, *Amer. Journal of Archaeology* LII (1948), p. 130; U. Hölscher, *Hermes* LXXXI (1953), p. 391ff.; A. Lesky, cited below.

[2] Cf. M. P. Nilsson, *Bull. British School at Athens* XLVI (1951), p. 122 f.

like the monsters raised by Tiamat against Marduk in the Akkadian story (*NET*, 62). Thus the *Theogony* is a late member in the series of Creation myths and shows the freedom of recombination of incidents which we have seen in the progressive stages of this and other stories.

It will be convenient to start our survey of Homer with echoes of the Creation myth. In the fourteenth book of the *Iliad* (200f.) Hera says she is going to visit Okeanos, the father of the gods, and Mother Tethys, who had looked after her when Zeus cast Kronos below the earth and the sea; she hopes that she can resolve their quarrels. This is closely related to the Akkadian Creation epic (*NET*, 61): «naught but primordial Apsu, their begetter, and Mummu-Tiamat, she who bore them all, their waters commingling as a single body... then it was that the gods were formed within them» and a few lines later we find that Apsu wants to destroy all creation because they make so much noise and Tiamat objects «Should we destroy what we have built?» Hera does not tell why Okeanos and Tethys have quarrelled; Apsu's desire to destroy creation has been transferred to another stage of the story and appears as Zeus' design to destroy mankind at the beginning of the *Cypria* and at several places in the *Iliad* (e. g. 1, 3; 2, 117; 11, 80; 19, 273). The deposition of Kronos (cf. also *Iliad* 14, 274; 8, 479) is a later stage corresponding to the triumph of Ea and later of Marduk in the Akkadian story and the triumph of Teshub in the Hittite story. The battles with the older gods before the Storm god establishes his rule also find their echo in Homer: Typhoeus (who has, as we have seen, something of Ullikummi and something of Tiamat's monsters) was blasted by a thunderbolt of Zeus and buried beneath the earth in Cilicia (*Iliad* 2, 782-3); the giants fight against Zeus (*Odyssey* 11, 308) and succeeded in imprisoning Ares (*Iliad* 5, 385); the magnificent description of Hera's chariot as she goes out to fight (*Iliad* 5, 720) recalls the preparation of Teshub's chariot when he goes out against Ullikummi. Lesky[1] has further pointed out that the description of Atlas in the first book of the *Odyssey* (52): «he knows the depths of the whole sea and himself holds the

[1] *Anzeiger Wien Akad.* 1950, p. 148.

tall pillars which hold earth and heaven apart» is explained by the description of the giant Upelluri in the Song of Ullikummi: Heaven and Earth were built on Upelluri without his knowing it, and he did not feel it when the stone man Ullikummi was put on his shoulder, and when the gods went to look at Ullikummi they saw him rising from the sea; in that sense the Homeric Atlas could know the depths of the sea. Thus Homer can refer to the Creation story in the same way that he refers for instance to the story of the Theban heroes[1].

Several other passages in the Song of Ullikummi seem to have Homeric echoes. Lesky has noted the parallel between the divine council, when the gods stand up at Ea's entry and similar scenes in Homer (e. g. *Iliad* 1, 533). When Ullikummi is born, the Fate-goddesses and the Mother goddesses lifted the child and put him on Kumarbi's knees; they are the Moirai of Homer, who decide the child's fate at birth. When the Sun god arrives at the house of the Storm god, «for his sitting a chair they set up, but he did not sit down. For his eating a table they laid, but he did not reach out. A cup they gave him but his lips they did not put to it»; so when Thetis visits Hephaistos, Charis sits her on a fair silver-nailed chair with a footstool and says she will fetch gifts for the guest (*Iliad* 18, 385 f.); or, when Patroclos arrives at Nestor's hut (11, 644 f.; cf. 23, 205), the old man bade him sit down but he answered «there is no time for sitting». When Hebat, the wife of the Storm god, heard of his defeat, «she almost fell from the roof. Had she taken a step, from the roof she would have fallen. But the palace women held her»; Andromache likewise climbed a tower to look for Hector and when she saw his body being dragged by Achilles' chariot, she fell backwards and fainted, and her women held her in her terror (*Iliad* 22, 462ff.).

We need not suppose that Homer or any of his predecessors knew these passages in the Song of Ullikummi. It would be safer to suppose that they were commonplaces of Eastern heroic poetry in the second millennium. It is however interesting to find Homer

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[4] «die echt homerische Technik der stückweis einander ergänzenden Berichte», W. Schadewaldt, *Iliasstudien*, Leipzig 1938, p. 119.

repeating commonplaces of Eastern heroic poetry[1]. We may add some instance of parallelism on a larger scale. The most striking is the connection of three scenes in the Gilgamesh epic with the *Iliad.* Enkidu becomes the friend of Gilgamesh and is the Patroklos of this Eastern Achilles. When he dies, Gilgamesh laments him: (*NET,* 88) «like a lion he raises up his voice, like a lioness deprived of her whelps. He paces back and forth before the couch.» In the *Iliad* (18, 316) the Achaeans lamented Patroclos all night; Achilles began the lamentation, laying his murderous hands on the breast of his friend, groaning deeply like a bearded lion, whose whelps have been stolen by a hunter. Then after the lamentations Gilgamesh like Achilles prepares an elaborate burial for his friend. Earlier in the poem (*NET,* 81) Gilgamesh visits his mother, the goddess Ninsun, to tell her about his proposed battle with Humbaba; Ninsun raised her hands to Shamash and said, «Why, having given me Gilgamesh for a son, with a restless heart didst thou endow him? And now thou didst affect him to go on a far journey, to the place of Humbaba, to face an uncertain battle, to travel an uncertain road». This is surely the tone of Thetis (*Iliad* 18, 53) «Ah! wretched me, who have born a hero to misery, I bore a son who was blameless and strong... as long as he lives and sees the light of the sun, he is grieved». The council of gods (*NET,* 85), which decides whether Enkidu or Gilgamesh is to die after slaying the Bull of Heaven, is not unlike the divine Councils in the *Iliad* which decide which of two heroes is to die; but it recalls particularly the Council at the beginning of the *Odyssey* which decides that Odysseus shall come home in spite of Poseidon's anger, since the Bull of Heaven, which Gilgamesh has killed, was sent against him by the goddess Ishtar when he refused to marry her (*NET,* 83).

We may be certain that the Creation Story came to Homer and Hesiod from the East. It is difficult to believe that the mourning for Patroclos is not influenced by the mourning for Enkidu.

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[1] A number of parallels from the whole range of epic here discussed have been collected by C. H. Gordon in *Amer. Journal of Archaeol.* LVI (1952), p. 93, and *Minos* III, 2 (1955), p. 126f.; F. Dirlmeier, *Rhein. Mus.* LXXXIX (1955), p. 20; A. Lesky, *Saeculum* VI (1955) p. 35f.

In these two cases at least parallelism of heroic poetry does not seem sufficient answer. It is no stranger that these Eastern poems should have passed over into Greek than that they should have been adapted from Sumerian into Akkadian, Hurrian, Hittite, and Phoenician. The question then is whether we can say at what point or points they entered the stream of Greek tradition. It is unnecessary to discuss the historical problems in any detail. Archaeological evidence suggests frequent Mycenaean contact with the East, particularly from the late fifteenth to the late thirteenth century and then a break until the ninth / eighth century[1]. On the Greek side the disturbances known to us as the Dorian invasion and the Ionian migration must have meant that the thin streams of poetic tradition were scarcely open to Oriental influences between at latest 1200 and at earliest 900 B. C. That the Homeric references to Phoenicians as traders are references to their commercial expansion in the tenth and ninth century would seem almost certain, and the finds at Al Mina just South of the Orontes prove Mainland and Ionian Greek contact with the East at least in the early eighth century: Al Mina is under Mount Kasios, from which the Storm god observed Ullikummi. But Al Mina also revealed Mycenaean sherds of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, and much more Mycenaean pottery was found inland at Alalakh, the town of which Al Mina was the port.[2]

That the Ionian Greeks of Homer's own time and perhaps rather earlier were open to Eastern ideas is unquestionable, and some of Homer's references (particularly to coloured ivory and to Phoenician works of art) may be contemporary. But it is also certainly possible that Homer's Mycenaean predecessors and their royal masters knew Oriental epic. The evidence for this is not only the presence of Mycenaean pottery in the Levant or Oriental ivories and other works of art in Mycenae. Such trade does not necessarily imply interchange of ideas and poetry. There are much more important kinds of evidence. First, the finds at Ugarit prove that

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[1] F. H. Stubbings, *Mycenaean Pottery from the Levant*, Cambridge 1951, p. 102 ff.

[2] L. Woolley, *A Forgotten Kingdom*, Baltimore 1953, p. 156, 163; C. M. Robertson, *Journal of Hell. Stud.* LX (1940), p. 20.

there was a Mycenaean settlement there in the thirteenth century[1]; these Mycenaeans must have been bilingual and may have transmitted Phoenician poetry westward. Secondly, the Greek spelling of the Phoenician place name Βύβλος proves that it came into the language before 1200 B. C. when the pronunciation changed from *Gubla* to *Gubal*; similarly the initial *S* of Tyre and Sidon were not distinguished in Phoenician after 1000 B. C.[2] Thirdly, the finding of a Mycenaean seal and a Mycenaean tablet in Boghazköy[3] support the otherwise almost certain identification of the Hittite Ahhiyawa[4] with the Homeric Achaioi (whether the King of Ahhiyawa known to the Hittites was a Mycenaean prince in Rhodes or on the mainland). The contact lasted from the early fourteenth to the late thirteenth century. An Achaean prince is sent to the Hittites to learn about chariots; an Achaean god is borrowed to cure the illness of a Hittite king; the Hittite king writes to the King of Achaea to extradite a rebel who is causing trouble among the Lycians, and the Mycenaean prince must have been able to read this letter just as Iobates of Lycia must have been able to read the letter which Bellerophon brought with him (*Iliad* 6, 169).

It does not therefore seem unlikely that Mycenaean kings got the taste for medium scale epic (Atrahasis 1245 lines, Gilgamesh 1400 lines, Baal 5000 lines)[5] as well as for chariots, from the Hittites and Phoenicians and that they told their singers some of the stories. If they had their poetry recorded (and both Linear B and papyrus were available)[6] there is no reason to suppose either that the recording affected the technique of singers (any more than Eastern recording affected Eastern singers) or that the records survived the Dorian invasion.

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1 Stubbings, *op. cit.*, p. 71.

2 W. F. Albright, *Amer. Journal of Archaeol.* LIV (1950), p. 165f. Add now the Semitic loan words on the Mycenaean tablets, see above p. 104.

3 J. Friedrich *Minos* III, 1 (1954), p. 6; E. Laroche, *Minos* III, 1 (1954) p. 8; E. Peruzzi, *Minos* III, 2 (1955), p, 118.

4 Gurney, *The Hittites,* p. 46ff.

5 Albright, *loc. cit.*, p. 164.

6 S. Marinatos, *Minos* I, 1 (1951), p. 40.