

The Tablet RS h6
and the incompetent buffoon
named
Richard Dumbrill

In the following paper:

https://www.academia.edu/44818683/Birth_of_music_theory [paper]
<https://www.academia.edu/s/fec9b296fb?source=work> [session],

the incompetent buffoon Richard Dumbrill proposes an analysis of the musicological Tablet h6, found in Ugarit and partly written in Hurrian. The lyrics are in Hurrian but the indications for singing are given in a kind of mangled Akkadian.

In spite of very lofty scientific proclamations at the beginning of his book, it would seem that Dumbrill does not like criticism of his approach. Originally, I did not want to spend a fraction of my precious time on this issue, but, as Dumbrill kept harassing me with private mails on Academia.edu, I decided otherwise.

What is more, in writing this review, I discovered that Dumbrill is not just a buffoon, *et un connard*, but a fraud who tailors and forges data, to make them fit into his “theory”.

1. The name of Tablet h6

The first point is that incompetent Buffoon Dumbrill (2020:88) cannot cite the name of Tablet h6 correctly:

HURRIAN TEXT H.6 (RŠ13.30 + 15.49 + 17.387)

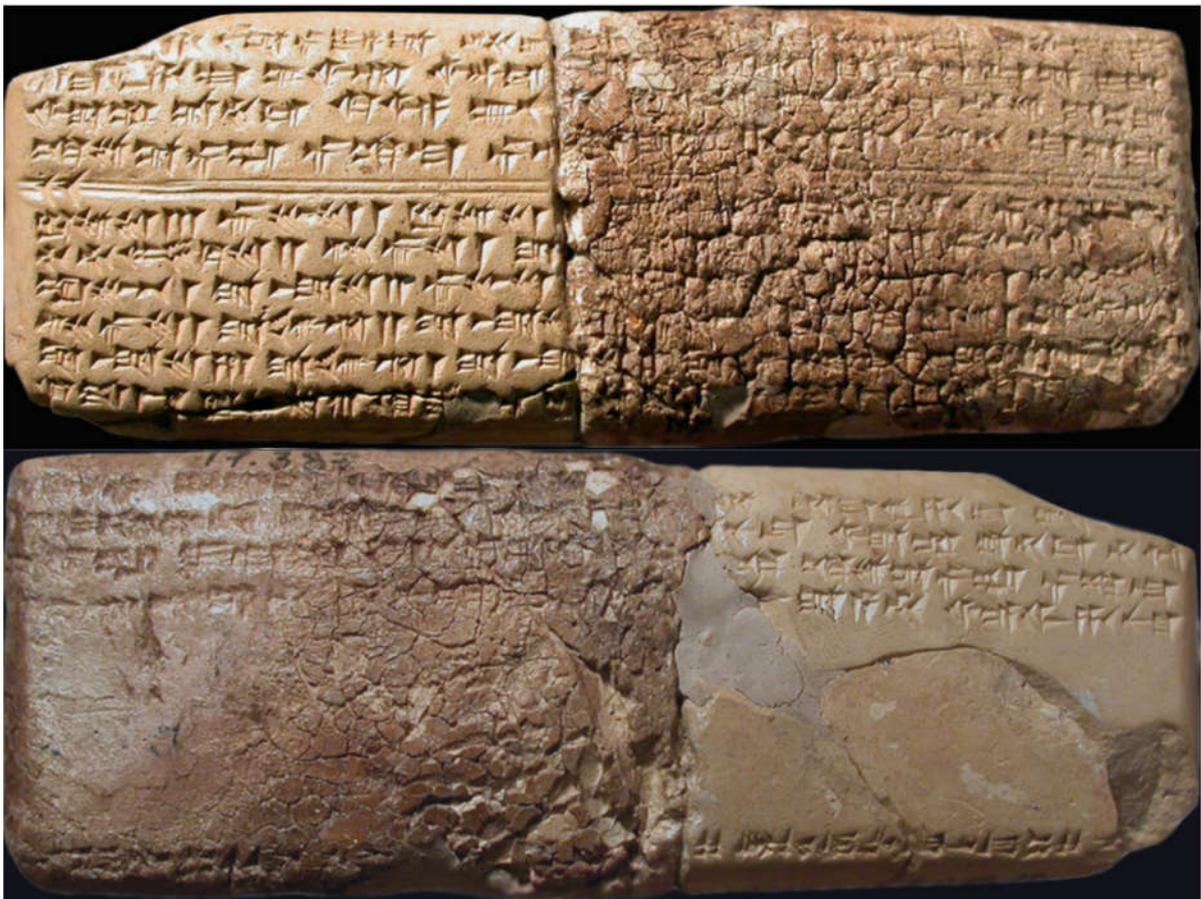


Figure. 61. Tablet H6 = (RŠ13.30 + 15.49 + 17.387), Obverse and Reverse. This tablet is hosted at the National Museum of Damascus.

There is no particular reason to write RŠ, instead of RS.
 Besides, the correct figure is 15.30 (instead of 13.30).

2. The invented bilingual in Babylonian [sic] and Hurrian

Next, on the same page (2020:88), Buffoon 🐼Dumbrill🐼 invents “a bilingual text, Hurrian and Babylonian [sic] of the 14th century BC, proving the practice of the Hurrian language at Ugarit. It was published by Thureau-Dangin in *Syria*, 12 (1931).”

Note that the Bilingual is a quite exceptional Sumerian¹–Hurrian list of words (of the type *Har–hubullu*).

3. The unfalsifiable crookery of a song without lyrics

Then, Buffoon 🐼Dumbrill🐼 (2020:90) moves on to the core of his crookery: “We shall only discuss music notation since the lyrics are a matter of philology [sic] which is not of the competence of the present work”.

In other words, Buffoon 🐼Dumbrill🐼 invents a reconstructed sequence of fifths and thirds, ** without ** ever trying to see if his reconstruction works with the available Hurrian lyrics. This is what we will do now.

The musical indications also involve figures, which remain quite enigmatic as to their meanings and use.

The core issue is to determine if Buffoon 🐼Dumbrill🐼’s reconstruction concords with the Hurrian lexemes or not. As a rule, it would seem that each syllable of Hurrian coincides with one note.

As will appear below, there are two main issues: (1) Buffoon 🐼Dumbrill🐼’s theory, with only fifths and thirds, cannot accommodate words with four syllables, (2) Cheater 🐼Dumbrill🐼 alters, tailors and forges the actual contents of Tablet h6.

1a. [x x] ha-ni²-ta

Possibly 5 syllables = 🐼D🐼 descending *qablite* of 5 notes => no issue

ni-ia-ša

3 syllables = 🐼D🐼 ascending *irbute* of 3 notes => no issue

zi-ú-e š[i²]-nu-te

Possibly 5 syllables = 🐼D🐼 descending *qablite* of 5 notes => no issue

Both words are therefore sung in the same fifth.

After a good start, the situation now seriously worsens as Buffoon 🐼Dumbrill🐼’s theory cannot accommodate (Hurrian) words with four syllables.

zu-tu-ri-ia

4 syllables = 🐼D🐼 ascending [*šahri*] of 3 notes => failed

It must be noted that the original tablet is damaged, and *šahri* is only 🐼D’s🐼 guesswork.

ú-bu-ga²-ra

4 syllables = 🐼D🐼 ascending *titimišarte* of 3 notes => failed

[x x x] 1b. -ur-ni

? syllables = ? descending *uštamari* of ? notes => cannot be evaluated

Cheater 🐼Dumbrill🐼 erases this part from his analysis.

ta-ša-al ki-il-la

4 syllables = 🐼D🐼 ascending *titimišarte* of 3 notes => failed

Cf. ú-bu-ga²-ra => this is the second time *titimišarte* should have 4 notes.

[z]i-li ši-i[p²-r]i²

4 syllables = 🐼D🐼 ascending *zirte* of 3 notes => failed

Both words are therefore sung in the same fourth.

hu-ma-ru-ḥa-at

4 syllables = 🐼D🐼 ascending *šahri* of 3 notes => failed

Cf. zu-tu-ri-ia => this is the second time *šahri* should have 4 notes.

ú-wə-ri

3 syllables = ascending [*irbu*]te of 3 notes => no issue with *irbute*

Cheater 🐼Dumbrill🐼’s reads *šaššate* but, according to Laroche (1968:463), the tablet can only have three signs <x-x-te>, thus it would seem that here *irbute* is better.

It seems that Line6 contains the same indication twice: <x-x-te 2 ir-bu-te 2>, because the next word <hu-ma-ru-ha-at> cannot be sung according to *irbute*. It is either a scribal mistake or the word <ú-wə-ri> was sung twice.

Beginning of Line2

hu-ma-ru-ha-at

4 syllables = a [?]descending *tuppunu* of 4[?] notes => ?

Cheater Dumbrill  reads a descending [embubu] of 5 notes, but the (undamaged) indication is *tuppunu*.

ú-wə-ri

3 syllables = D ascending *šaššate* of 3 notes => no issue

Here, there seems to be some confusion as regards the segmentation into words.

wa-an-da-ni[?]-ta ú[?]-

6[?] syllables = D ascending *irbute* of 3 notes + ascending *šaššate* of 3 notes => no issue

It is not clear if this string corresponds to one or two words => *wanda nidalu*[?]. Cf. ni-ta-li-il.

Besides, Cheater Dumbrill  does not take *šaššate* into account in his invented procrustean “reconstruction”.

Instead, he plucks out of the air a *nidkabli* of 5 descending notes, obviously off the mark.

ku-ri ku-ur-ku-ur-ta

5 syllables = D [?]descending *titarkabli* of 3 notes => failed

titarkabli cannot have only 3 notes as claimed by Buffoon Dumbrill .

i-ša-al-la

3[?] syllables = D ascending *titimišarte* of 3 notes => ?

It seems that <i-ša-al-la> has four syllables (**iza[?]alla*), not three. See below <wə-ša-al> (**weza[?]al*).

2.b. ú-la-li-kab

4 syllables = D ascending *zirte* of 3 notes => failed

Second time *zirte* should have four notes, not three.

gi-al-li-[ik[?]]-gi

4[?] syllables = D descending *šahri* of 3 notes => failed

Third time *šahri* should have four notes, not three.

ši-ri-it x-x-nu-šu

6[?] syllables = D ascending *šaššate* of 3 notes + ascending *irbute* of 3 notes => no issue

Probably two words (2+4 syllables).

wə-ša-al ta-ti-ib

5 syllables = D descending *natkabli* of 5 notes => no issue

It seems that <wə-ša-al> has three syllables (**weza[?]al*), not two. Cf. <i-ša-al-la> (**iza[?]alla*).

ti-ši-a

3[?] syllables = D descending *šahri* of 3 notes => ?

One is left to wonder if an extra sign is not lacking at the end of <ti-ši-a>, as *šahri* has 4 notes.

3.a. wə-ša-al

3 syllables = D ascending *šaššate* of 3 notes => no issue

Here, there seems to be some confusion in the lyrics. On the whole, the number of syllables coincides with the number of notes, but the segmentation into words has to be arranged to fit the melodic blocks.

ta-ti-ib

2[?] syllables = D descending *šahri* of 4 notes => ?

Is the word <ta-ti-ib> sung twice?

dī-ši-a

3 syllables = D descending *šaššate* of 3 notes => no issue

ú-nu-[g]a[?]

3 syllables = D ascending *šahri* of 3 notes => ?

This item seems to be lacking one syllable, as *šahri* has 4 notes. The reading <ga[?]> seems false.

kap-ši-li

3 syllables = D descending *šaššate* of 3 notes => no issue

ú-nu-ga[?]-at

3 syllables = D ascending *irbute* of 3 notes => no issue

ak-li ša-am-ša-am-me-

5 syllables = D descending *kitme* of 5 notes => no issue

ni²-ta²- [3.b] -li-il uk-la-al

The reading according to Dietrich–Loretz (1975:522) best matches the necessary number of syllables.

5² syllables = D^{D} descending *qablite* of 5 notes => no issue

tu-nu-ni-ta-x

5² syllables = D^{D} descending *kitme* of 5 notes => no issue

[x x]-ka ka-li-

5² syllables = D^{D} descending *qablite* of 5 notes => no issue

ta-ni-il ni-ka-la

5 syllables = D^{D} descending *kitme* of 5 notes => no issue

5 syllables = D^{D} descending *qablite* of 5 notes => no issue

The last part is apparently sung twice, as is <ú-wə-ri> in 2x *irbute*.

There is a fourth line of lyrics, but it has no specific indications.

4. Summary of the lengths

The musical indications have the following lengths:

- *irbute* = 3 ascending notes (D^{D} correct)

- *šaššate* = 3 ascending notes (D^{D} correct)

- *titimišarte* = 4 ascending notes (D^{D} incorrect) ú-bu-ga²-ra, ta-ša-al ki-il-la,

- *zirte* = 4 ascending notes (D^{D} incorrect) [z]i-li ši-i[p²-r]i², ú-la-li-kab

- *šahri* = 4² descending notes (D^{D} incorrect) gi-al-li-[ik²]-gi, ti-ši-a-[x], ta-ti-ib ta-ti-ib

- *tuppunu* = 4² descending notes (D^{D} incorrect) hu-ma-ru-ha-at,

- *qablite* = 5 descending notes (D^{D} correct) ni²-ta²- [3.b] -li-il uk-la-al, [x x]-ka ka-li-, ta-ni-il ni-ka-la

- *titarkabli* = 5 descending notes (D^{D} incorrect) ku-ri ku-ur-ku-ur-ta

- *natkabli* = 5 descending notes (D^{D} correct) wə-ša-al ta-ti-ib

- *kitme* = 5 descending notes (D^{D} correct) ak-li ša-am-ša-am-me-, tu-nu-ni-ta-x, ta-ni-il ni-ka-la

- *uštamari* = cannot be determined

A major issue with Buffoon D^{D} theory is that it does not have melodic fourths for Hurrian words with four syllables. There is no doubt that several indications, *titimišarte*, *zirte*, *šahri*, *tuppunu*, correspond to fourths.