Words *kapa* and *kuro* from Linear A tablets

Alexander Akulov

independent scholar; Saint Petersburg, Russia; e-mail: aynu@inbox.ru

Abstract:

The words *kapa* and *kuro* can be seen in the text of some tablets of Linear A. The word *kapa* is usually placed at the beginning of a text. This word corresponds to the Hattic verb *pa* – “to put”, “to place” accompanied by the prefix *ka-* expressing dative/locative or “on” meanings in verbal word-forms, and also this prefix is used in imperative forms. And thus, the word *kapa* can be translated as imperative/demand “supply”, “provide”. The word *kuro* is placed mainly at the end of a text and is followed by the signs of numbers. This word is usually conventionally translated as “total”. I suppose that the word *kuro* can be connected to the Hattic verb *kur* “to stand”, “to stay”, “to hold up”, and so it seems to be more correct to translate *kuro* as “there is” “there are” or “[we] have”.

**Keywords:** Linear A; Minoan language; Minoan Crete; Hattic language

1. Introduction to the problem

By now there are 372 inscriptions made by Linear A from the archaeological site of Haghia Triada. Many of these tablets have been heavily fragmented or contain just one or several signs, but many have relatively well extant texts. One of the most interesting tablets is Haghia Triada 102 (HT 102). The tablet is attributed to the Late Minoan IB period[^1].

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[^1]: Late Minoan IB lasted from about 1500 to 1450 BCE.
The HT 102 is a rectangular clay tablet of the following sizes: 6.1 cm × 7 cm × 1 cm. The tablet has an inscription on one of its sides, the inscription was partly damaged, but in general, the inscription is quite extant and it is possible to work with its text (Fig. 2).

Fig. 2. A photo and a drawing of HT 102 (image source – Godart, Olivier 1976: 168)

The text of the inscription of HT 102 contains syllabograms, logograms, and numbers; and it seems that the text is a recording about the grain to be provided for a certain number of people (Schrijver 2019: 343).

Peter Schrijver writes that Minoan is a quite close relative of Hattic, and suggests that the word sarja (signs 3 – 4, Fig. 3) means “people” / “workers” and correlates with the Hattic word zariu meaning “human being” (Schrijver 2019: 345).

It is noteworthy that the conclusion about the relatedness of Minoan and Hattic made by Schrijver correlates well with my own conclusion about the close relatedness of Minoan/Keftiw and Hattic (Akulov 2017, 2021).

I suppose that it is quite noteworthy when two scholars independently come to the same conclusion, it means that the probability of the corresponding idea/hypothesis being real is relatively high.

Schrijver notes that from the context of the use of the word kuro (Fig. 3, signs 29 – 30) it is possible to conclude that it can be translated as “total” (Schrijver 2019: 343), but he doesn’t give any Hattic analogs of this word and doesn’t make any attempts to give Hattic analogs for any other words of HT 102.

In this paper I am going to speak about the words kapa (Fig. 3, signs 1 – 2) and kuro (Fig. 3 signs 30 – 31) of HT 102; and also these words can be seen on some other tablets with Linear A inscriptions.
The structure of HT 102 (Fig. 3) is the following: syllabograms *kapa* (1–2), syllabograms *sara/sarja* (3–4) logogram “grain” AB 120 (5), numeral “976” (6–8), syllabograms *pani* (9–10), an unknown logogram\(^2\) A574 (11), number “33” (12–13), a

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Fig. 3. The inscription of HT 102 with numbered signs (original image source – Godart, Olivier 1976: 168)

\(^2\) This logogram looks much like that of “grain”, so it is possible to suppose that this logogram also denotes a kind of grain or some food.
fragment of an unknown sign A 705 (14), logogram “man” AB100 (15), the same logogram as
11 A574 (15) number “33” (17 – 18), syllabograms dirinama (19 – 22), an unknown sign (23)
number “3” (24), an unknown sign, supposedly a logogram (25), number “10” (26),
syllabograms ika (27 – 28), number “5” (29), syllabograms kuro (30 – 31), a heavily fragmented
sign of a number, most probably “1000” (32), number “60” (33).

The inscription is read from left to right and from top to bottom because all numbers shown in
the text (976 + 33 + 33 + 3 + 10 + 5) are summated by 1060 which is in the very bottom and
right corner of the inscription (Fig. 3, signs 32 – 33).

As it was noted above the inscription is about the grain and other food to be given to different
groups of people (probably different types of workers).

3. The word ለፈ kapa

The word kapa ለፈ that is seen in the very beginning of HT 102 (Fig. 3, 1 – 2), is also
represented on the following tablets: HT 6 (Fig. 4), HT 8 (Fig. 5), HT 94 (Fig. 6), and HT 140 (Fig.
7).

Fig. 4. A photo and a drawing of HT 6 side a, the word kapa ለፈ is marked by a red line (image
source - Godart, Olivier 1976: 12)
Fig. 5. A photo and a drawing of HT 8 side b, the word *kapa* is marked by a red line (image source – Godart, Olivier 1976: 16)

Fig. 6. A photo and a drawing of HT 94 side a, the word *kapa* is marked by a red line (image source – Godart, Olivier 1976: 150)
Fig. 7. A photo and a drawing of HT 140, the word *kapa* is marked by a red line (image source – Godart, Olivier 1976: 236)

The word *kapa* is usually placed at the beginning of a text, this word corresponds to the Hattic verb *pa* – “to put”, “to place” (Soysal 2004: 298) accompanied by the prefix *ka-* that expresses the meaning of dative/locative, or the meaning of “on” in verbal word-forms (Soysal 2004: 225).

Also this prefix *ka-* can be seen in imperative forms, for instance: *ka-mar* – “slit” / “incise” (Kasian 2010: 181), where mar means “to slit, “to cut” (Soysal 2004: 294).

And thus, the word *kapa* can be translated as imperative/demand “supply”, “provide”.

4. The word *kuro*

The word *kuro* can be seen on the following tablets from Haghia Triada: HT 8, HT 11, HT 13, HT 25, HT 27, HT 39, HT 40, HT 46, HT 74, HT 85, HT 88, HT 89, HT 94, HT 100, HT 104, HT 109, HT 110, HT 116, HT 117, HT 118, HT 119, HT 122, HT 123, HT 127, on one tablet from Zakros (ZA 15), and on one tablet from Phaistos (PH 31).

As far as tablets containing the word *kuro* are too numerous, in the current paper I am going to show only some of them just for illustrative purposes: HT 94a (Fig. 8), HT 119 (Fig. 9), ZA 15 (Fig. 10), and PH 31 (Fig. 11).
Fig. 8. A photo and a drawing of HT 94 side a, the word *kuro* is marked by a red line (image source – Godart, Olivier 1976: 150)

Fig. 9. A photo and a drawing of HT 119, the word *kuro* is marked by a red line (image source – Godart, Olivier 1976: 202)
Fig. 10. A photo and a drawing of ZA 15 side b, the word *kuro* is marked by a red line (image source – Godart, Olivier 1979: 184)

Fig. 11. A photo and a drawing of PH 31 side a, the word *kuro* is marked by a red line (image source – Godart, Olivier 1976: 318)

The word *kuro* is placed mainly at the end of a text and is followed by the signs of numbers. This word is usually conventionally translated as “total”. I suppose that the word *kuro* can be connected to the Hattic verb *kur* “to stand”, “to stay”, “to hold up” (Soysal 2004: 291), and so it seems to be more correct to translate *kuro* as “there is” / “there are” or “[we] have”.

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